ON TEST

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36 Bristling FH flagship

Welcome to TRUCKING

ON THE WEB!
For the latest news, features and more, see **www.truckingmag.co.uk**, find us on *facebook* and follow us on *twitter!*

As ever, we've put together a packed issue for you. Some highlights start with our cover star, Aylestone Transport's superb new Volvo FH flagship. In true company tradition, this truck has been spec'd to the absolute max. The reason, so bossman Bodge tells us, is because running a blinged-up fleet is a sure-fire way to attract and retain drivers – so this new vehicle is bristling with options and a full "Kelsafication". Read all about it in The Big Deal, starting page 36.

Our first Truck on Trial of 2022 is also a bit special. Pip has travelled up to the Scottish Highlands to see how an MAN TGX 26.510 and Scania R650 are coping with Taylor's tough logging operation. Running full-weight almost all the time, there's a lot asked of these tractor units – and you can discover which is the best for the job starting page 44. The results may just surprise you.

On test is Iveco's X-WAY. You may recall we drove this on UK roads back in the September issue, but late last year we flew to Italy to take an 8x4 tipper into a large working quarry to see how it fares off the beaten track. Iveco has an envious off-road pedigree, so we were keen to see if the new generation can keep up. Read our verdict, starting page 30.

And in Classic Truck, we're kicking off an in-depth two-parter on Volvo's barnstorming F86. This is the truck that arguably paved the way for European manufacturers to enter the UK market after British hauliers became dissatisfied with home-grown vehicles. To say it was a disruptive introduction is a real understatement – find out why, starting page 70.

Andy Stewart

Andy Stewart, editor

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NEWS IN BRIEF

OBE for LUK chief

Logistics UK chief executive David Wells has been awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours list for services to transport and logistics. Wells, 56, who has been in charge of the organisation for the past six years, has been recognised for his work to raise the voice and impact of the sector at a critical time to keep Britain's economy moving during the Brexit transition and the Covid-19 pandemic. "I am truly honoured to receive this OBE after an unprecedented period of challenge and change for our sector," he said. "I have always said our industry shows resilience unlike any other, and that has been demonstrated time and again during my time as chief executive. I am indebted to all our amazing members and their staff, as well as the team at Logistics UK. This award is for them too."

Felixstowe is go for Renault

Renault Truck Commercials Felixstowe has moved to a new purpose-built dealer premises located at Hodgkinson Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk. Renault said the ultra-modern facility reflects growing demand for its trucks and aftersales service and support in the important Felixstowe area. Situated in close proximity to the Port of Felixstowe, the UK's biggest and busiest container port, the 1.5-acre site has access to the A14, the primary route out of the docks, and to routes across the UK. The new site features secure parking, fully equipped three-bay workshop, bodyshop, tacho lane and latest diagnostic equipment to provide all-makes servicing, repairs and maintenance. It also provides Renault Trucks' 24/7 roadside assistance. For waiting drivers, there is a comfortable, well-equipped rest room, shower, free WIFI and large-screen TV. "Our newest depot has been designed from the ground up to deliver maximum vehicle uptime. It is an important part of our growth strategy," said Con Rooney, MD, Renault Trucks Commercials.

UK CV PRODUCTION OUTPUT SINKS TO FOUR-YEAR NOVEMBER LOW

UK commercial vehicle production decreased to 7940 units in November, according to figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

Output declined -7.8 per cent – the weakest November performance since 2017. This, said SMMT, reflects challenges faced by the wider industry, with the global shortage of semiconductors – itself a by-product of the pandemic – continuing to stymie production.

November's decline was driven by a -16.4 per cent fall in the number of CVs built for export, while the domestic market grew marginally by 4.5 per cent.

During 2021, the share of exported CVs has decreased by almost five percentage points, from 56.4 to 51.5 per cent.

At the same time, domestic demand has grown – albeit against weak demand in 2020 – given gradual economic recovery and high demand for online deliveries.

Year-to-date, 66,753 units have been built – an increase of 12.2 per cent on the pandemic-ravaged 2020, thanks to an increase in output earlier in the year.

However, overall output remains -16.6 per cent down against the five-year pre-pandemic average.

"After the significant growth seen in the sector in October, November's decline in output is disappointing," said Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive. "The impact of the global shortage of semiconductors cannot be overstated, and coupled with increasing uncertainty over the pandemic, the months ahead will be difficult," he concluded.

CV MANUFACTURING

	Nov-20	Nov-21	% change	YTD-20	YTD-21	% change
Total	8,609	7,940	-7.8%	59,478	66,753	12.2%
Home	3,560	3,721	4.5%	25,904	32,373	25.0%
Export	5,049	4,219	-16.4%	33,574	34,380	2.4%
% export	58.6%	53.1%		56.4%	51.5%	

Source: SMMT

Hauliers urged to plan now for switch away from red diesel

Road freight operators who use red diesel to power refrigeration and other devices are being reminded time is running out to plan for a switch to cleaner fuels before the existing rebate comes to an end.

The entitlement to use cheaper red diesel will be withdrawn from many industries as of April 1, 2022, driven by the UK government's bid to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050.

The move away from red diesel is intended to encourage the take-up of more environmentally friendly fuels, such as biodiesels.

Such a significant transition could well present serious challenges for some operations. Crucially, the transition cannot start on April 1 – it needs to be completed by then, with all stocks of red diesel depleted by that point.

Paul Brookes, fleet and gas sales director for TSG Solutions UK, warned unprepared organisations could leave themselves open to fines and rising costs.

He said affected businesses must start considering alternative fuel options now and be aware of the implications of this change. Brookes said firms should consider the following points if they are to successfully weather the change:

* Do not stockpile red diesel in the belief you will be allowed to continue to use it after the deadline – this is definitely not the case and illegal usage will result in prosecution.

* Be careful with alternative fuel choice. Undyed/white fuels are a more attractive proposition to thieves and will be subject to rising fuel costs.

* Due to this increased risk of theft, enhanced security measures are recommended.

* Consider investing in a reliable fuel management service to help minimise the financial loss caused by theft, leaks and short deliveries.

* If you are changing from red diesel to an alternative fuel (not white diesel), tanks, piping and dispensing equipment should be flushed and cleaned.

* Registered fuel suppliers must ensure there is no trace of the red dye in their tanks and supply lines.

ABOVE Red diesel rebate will end in April 2022

1 IN 3 FIRMS HAVE TAKEN NO ACTION TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN

Nearly a third of UK businesses have failed to take any steps to reduce the environmental impact of their supply chain operations, according to a new report.

Research conducted prior to COP26 by supply chain and logistics consultancy SCALA revealed 32 per cent of firms have no measures in place to monitor the total impact of their operations.

In addition, nearly two thirds (64 per cent) also reported having no plans in place to take any action to reduce the impact of their eCommerce operations.

This, said SCALA, suggests companies are failing to effectively monitor and react to their entire environmental footprint.

As companies generate more than two-thirds of the planet's emissions – and more than 90 per cent of these emissions are produced in the supply chain – this lack of action is concerning, SCALA said.

"This survey was undertaken prior to COP26; and while the outcome of COP has had a mixed reception, the anecdotal feedback we are receiving from businesses is undoubtedly it has raised the profile of the climate crisis we are all facing," said John Perry, MD, SCALA.

"While measuring a business's carbon emissions is the first step, identifying the specific areas of where environmental action needs to be prioritised is a good place to start.

"For eCommerce businesses, this may be tackling freight emissions by introducing steps such as combining truck loads, increasing the number of items per pallet, or reducing diesel transport wherever possible.

"By mapping a supply chain, businesses can quickly see what areas of their business are the most carbon-intensive and can then take consequent action immediately," he concluded. "Failure to act will only tarnish a business' reputation, as well as hinder the process towards a greener and cleaner future."

Leyland Trucks hits half-million milestone

ABOVE **Milestone LF 210 was built for loyal DAF operator, Minoli**

Lancashire-based Leyland Trucks has celebrated the production of its 500,000th vehicle – a 16-tonne DAF LF 210 – which was handed over to customer Minoli at a special production line ceremony on December 2.

The LF 210 is the first of four new vehicles for Minoli – an importer and distributor of Italian porcelain tiles – two of which are spec'd with a 210 bhp PACCAR PX-5 engine, ZF AS-Tronic six-speed gearbox, rear air suspension, adjustable roof spoiler and cab collars.

The Leyland Assembly Plant was constructed in 1979 with full production starting in 1980. Today, Leyland Trucks occupies an 86-acre site with 93,000 m^2 of covered production space. A workforce of 1000 includes several fourth- and fifth-generation employees.

The current vehicle ranges include LF, CF, XF models, and also the New Generation DAF range of XF, XG and XG+ vehicles.

The lightweight LF range was entirely designed, developed and engineered at Leyland Trucks, while the factory is also home to a unique in-house body-building programme.

IVECO GOES INDEPENDENT AFTER DEMERGER FROM CNH INDUSTRIAL

Iveco Group has marked its successful demerger from parent company CNH Industrial, with shares trading on the Italian stock exchange Euronext Milan as of January 3.

Specifically, the newly listed Group is formed from the demerger of the commercial and speciality vehicles, powertrain, and related financial services businesses from CNH Industrial N.V.

The move follows just weeks after Daimler Truck AG made a similar split from former parent company, Daimler AG, on December 10.

Iveco Group said its stock market debut "heralds the launch of a solid, major international industrial enterprise; an independent 'pure player' with over 170 years of history in the sector through its various brands".

Its activities include the production of trucks, buses, firefighting and civil protection vehicles, plus engines for on- and off-road, marine and power generation industries.

Iveco Group comprises eight brands, 29 manufacturing plants, 31 research and development centres, and a workforce of around 34,000 people. It has presence around the world, with a strong base in Europe.

"Our first day of trading marks an historic milestone as we become a fully independent company," said CEO, Gerrit Marx. "We have all the requisites needed for long-term success, including solid foundations,

a focused team, and a clear strategy, which will allow us to move quickly, innovating and partnering to create better solutions in today's fast-changing environment."

PANDEMIC ACCELERATES DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AMONG UK FLEETS

Three-quarters (74 per cent) of UK fleets have adopted more digital systems since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, new research has revealed.

A pan-European study conducted by Webfleet Solutions among 1050 fleet decision-makers found in the UK, smaller fleets of up to 50 vehicles led the charge, accounting for 80 per cent of the tech adopters.

Electronic signature tech (60 per cent) topped the list of the new digital solutions, followed by mobile apps (50 per cent) and digital document systems such as paperless invoicing (44 per cent). In every case, the uptick in digitisation was found to have helped their businesses deal with the pandemic, the report found.

"Covid-19 continues to have a dramatic impact on the way we live and work, making operational flexibility, smart customer interactions, risk management and cost control more important than ever," said Webfleet's sales director UK and Ireland, Beverley Wise.

"SME businesses in particular have had the agility to respond quickly to the ever-changing commercial landscape and have recognised the vital role technology can play in overcoming the financial and logistical challenges – improving the efficient flow of information, supporting remote working and minimising person-to-person interactions," she added.

The drive to increase efficiency was found to be the top reason for adopting more digital systems, cited by more than half (55 per cent) of those surveyed.

This was closely followed by efforts to reduce the spread of infection (51 per cent) and a continued commitment to sustainability (49 per cent).

Of those that haven't adopted more digital systems, 28 per cent cited cost as a barrier, 28 per cent said they had enough in place, while 22 per cent said they lacked the time or resources to implement new systems.

The Netherlands led the digitisation trend with 85 per cent adopting new digital systems, followed by Italy and Spain (both 77 per cent).

ABOVE Operators said uptick in digitisation has helped them deal with the impact of Covid-19

OPERATORS URGED TO FIT DASHCAMS TO COMBAT CRASH-FOR-CASH SCAMS

Hauliers and drivers are being urged to fit dashcams to their trucks as recent data analysis from the Insurance Fraud Bureau (IFB) revealed of the 2.7 million motor insurance claims made across the UK between October 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020, 170,000 are suspected to be linked to crash-for-cash schemes.

Insurance claims can be time-consuming and costly. A lack of solid evidence often means companies automatically accept liability, which results in higher insurance premiums, damages the morale of drivers, and can unfairly call the reputation of companies into question.

According to a survey of drivers, fleet managers and other industry professionals undertaken by Brigade Electronics, cameras and recording technology significantly reduce incident reports and personal injury claims. More than half (56 per cent) said the tech improved driver behaviour, and 47 per cent said incident reports had decreased after installation.

The survey also found 29 per cent said instances of personal injury claims had dropped, while 32 per cent saw a reduction in insurance costs.

A standalone, front-facing dashcam can offer good protection against crash-for-cash scams because the accident is usually caused by the vehicle in front. Combining this with a rear-facing camera provides greater coverage around the vehicle. While drivers will rarely need to prove an accident wasn't their fault if their vehicle is rear-ended, it's useful to have footage to back this up.

These cameras also act as an effective deterrent against theft and vandalism, particularly for goods vehicles.

Internal cameras can provide proof a driver was paying full attention at the time of an accident, and offer evidence of any altercations or cab break-ins.

Alongside the number of cameras, operators should also decide which of the four most common modes of recording bests fits their needs. These are: continuous recording, activated automatically when the engine is started; parking recording, which records anything that triggers the camera's motion detector while stationary; event/incident recording, which uses the built-in G-sensor to record footage before and after a collision; and manual recording, where the driver presses a button to capture events in front of the vehicle.

BELOW Forward and rear-facing cameras can provide crucial evidence during an insurance claim

DVSA: Beware of emissions plate tampering

DVSA vehicle standards assessors have picked up on a small number of trucks which have recently been presented for annual test with some form of tampering carried out to the exhaust emissions data recorded on the vehicle manufacturer's plate.

On its *Moving On* blog, the Agency said plate tampering impacts government efforts to reduce emissions and could be an indicator of wider poor practice on an operator's part.

The MoT requires exhaust emissions to be tested to the manufacturer's Type Approval values. If this is not available, the vehicle could be tested to an incorrect standard.

DVSA said enforcement teams have followed up tampering reports by either writing to the operator asking for an explanation, or paying the operator a visit.

Most cases have resulted in the operator getting a replacement plate, but some hauliers have been reported to the traffic commissioner for public inquiry consideration.

DVSA said it has also discussed the issue with vehicle manufacturers, which have offered solutions to reinstate the data if it's missing.

The Agency's advice to those who have discovered an issue is to contact your local dealer and get the problem resolved – although there will likely be a charge for this. However, DVSA said this is better than getting a visit from an enforcement examiner.

ABOVE DVSA assessors have noticed a recent rise in emissions plate fiddling during MoT inspections

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Cool Carriers

Temp-controlled specialist Samworth Brothers Supply Chain has become the latest UK operator to add Carrier Transicold's Vector eCool units into its fleet, taking delivery of six of the world's first fully autonomous, all-electric engineless refrigerated trailer systems. Samworth currently operates a 240-strong trailer fleet. The business has added the new engineless Vector eCool unit to six 13.6 m Gray & Adams trailers after success with a demonstrator unit during a four-week trial. "Seeing the unit in action made making the switch an easy decision," said Ian Cooper, Samworth's regional fleet manager. The Vector eCool unit combines Carrier's E-Drive all-electric tech with a new energy recovery and storage system. This converts kinetic energy generated by the trailer axle and brakes into electric power, which is stored in a battery that powers the refrigeration unit – a loop that creates the industry's first fully autonomous system, producing no direct CO_2 or particulate emissions, the manufacturer claims.

Volta variants

Volta Trucks has confirmed engineering work has begun on smaller Zero models. The two new variants – 7.5-tonnes and 12-tonnes – will be joining the original 16-tonner, with production to begin in 2024. The two smaller Zero trucks will feature a number of attributes seen on the larger model, including the same cab and working environment. The low central seating position and optimised visibility have been retained. However, the two new trucks will be able to operate differently to the original – for example, the 7.5-tonne Zero can be worked on Sundays in some areas where larger vehicles are currently banned. A pilot fleet of 7.5- and 12-tonne trucks is set to enter customer trials in 2023, with vehicles launched into Paris and London initially. Other cities will follow, including Milan, Madrid and Randstad. Volta said it expects production to move from 14,000 units in 2024 to more than 27,000 in 2025.

TESCO PUTS UK'S FIRST ELECTRIC ARTICS TO WORK

Two DAF CF Electrics will haul groceries in Wales

Tesco has announced it is putting the UK's first commercially used fully electric heavy freight articulated trucks onto the road.

Two new 37-tonne DAF CF Electrics will be used to transport food and other products from Wentloog rail terminal outside Cardiff to Tesco's distribution centre in Magor, Wales, in partnership with logistics and international freight-forwarding company FSEW.

The operator said its first two electric trucks will replace around 65,000 diesel-fuelled road miles with clean green energy, removing 87.4 tonnes of CO_2 per year. To power the new service, FSEW has installed charging points at its site in South Wales that provide enough energy to charge the CF Electrics for 100 miles before needing to charge again.

At around 30 miles each way, the Wentloog-Magor journey is an ideal location to understand the potential and range of these trucks for use throughout the UK and elsewhere in Tesco's fleet, FSEW said.

The deployment will contribute to Tesco's efforts to achieve net zero emissions in its own operations by 2035, and FSEW's work to replace more than 40 diesel vehicles with low-carbon alternatives and switch to fleet-wide zero-emissions transport operations by 2025.

"Tesco's distribution network is one of the largest in the UK and plays an important role in our efforts to become net zero," said Jason Tarry, Tesco UK and ROI CEO.

"We've already made progress by starting our switch to electric home delivery vans and rolling out electric vehicle charging points for our customers. I'm excited Tesco can also lead the way in electric haulage innovation, helping to tackle this last source of road transport emissions with the support of FSEW."

Jason Watts, Tesco's Magor distribution centre manager, added: "We all want to do what we can for the environment, so we're proud Magor and Wales was chosen to be the first location to use these zero emissions lorries. It's always exciting to get new kit and we can't wait to try these lorries out in our busy operation."

Partners complete one of Europe's first zero-emission cross-border deliveries

One of Europe's first zero-emission cross-border heavy-duty load transportations has been completed by European digital road freight-forwarder sennder, and global speciality chemicals and performance materials company Cabot Corporation.

In a pilot electric trucking project, sennder transported over 17 tonnes of product for Cabot from the port of Rotterdam to Antwerp, Belgium and then returned to base – a round trip covering a distance of more than 300 km.

The pilot project was conducted to test the long-term capabilities of 40-plus tonne electric trucks. BREYTNER, an operator of zero-emission electric trucks, in association with joint venture partner Hn Post & Zonen, provided the vehicle which has a maximum gvw of 50 tonnes and a battery range of 150 km.

It ran entirely on electric power, charging once on the way to its destination and again during its return to base. Each charge took approximately an 80 minutes and occurred in the Netherlands, a country with one of the densest charging networks in the world.

The partners said the pilot project was intended to demonstrate a 40-plus tonne electric truck can travel over 300 km while being exclusively charged by existing highway infrastructure.

"Delivering our first zero-emissions heavy-duty electric transport is an accomplishment for our teams to be proud of," said Graham Major-Ex, head of green business at sennder.

"Some doubted whether fully loaded 40-plus tonne trucks could travel highway distances on just electricity – we have proven this is not only possible, but something deliverable today."

ABOVE Electric truck charged twice during its 300-plus km journey

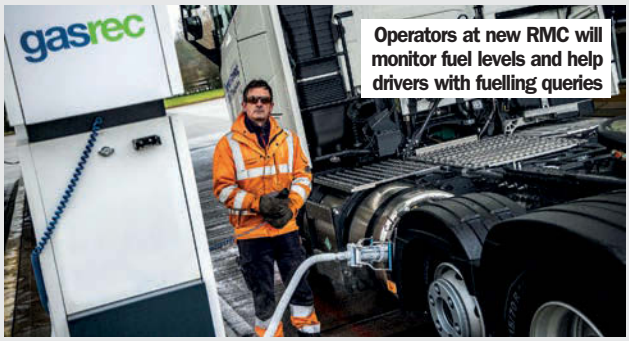
GASREC READIES REMOTE MONITORING TO KEEP HGV GAS SUPPLIES FLOWING

Gasrec has opened a Remote Monitoring Centre (RMC) in Daventry to monitor gas levels to prevent shortages, and quickly detect any equipment faults or potential safety issues.

Data will be closely watched by an initial team of six control centre operators who will observe and react to real-time data from every one of the company's biomethane refuelling stations located across the UK, plus its tanker fleet. This will be in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"The safety and resilience of our operations is at the heart of everything we do," said Tony Robinson, chief technical officer, Gasrec. "Historically this work has been incorporated into our operations and engineering team, but the substantial growth of the business over the past two years has enabled us to take things to the next level."

The centre operators – all filling new positions within the company – will be able to access and control CCTV footage of every Gasrec facility, allowing them to identify problems quickly while also offering advice or assistance to drivers fuelling their vehicles whatever time of day or night.



Operators at new RMC will monitor fuel levels and help drivers with fuelling queries

Gasrec said detailed data on the biomethane levels at each station, as well as every Gasrec tanker on the road, will be fed into the centre to ensure customers across the UK always have enough fuel to keep their fleets moving.

"Fuel availability at every location is a top priority, particularly as the demand from fleets transitioning from diesel to biomethane ramps up so quickly," Robinson added.

"With remote monitoring now in place – as well as quickly responding to defects, faults or breakdowns – we can also make sure our bulk deliveries are perfectly timed to replenish supplies, giving us increased confidence in our stock levels," he concluded.

Electric trucks now have priority at Port of Gothenburg terminals

In an bid to encourage hauliers to increase their use of emission-free trucks more rapidly, two terminal operators at the Port of Gothenburg have joined forces to offer "defined efficiency benefits" to fleets that have made the move to electric.

It's hoped the so-called 'Green Priority' project will accelerate the switch to the use of emission-free trucks at the port.

The Green Priority project is part of the Tranzero Initiative, where Stena Line, Volvo Group, Scania and the Gothenburg Port Authority have come together to speed up the transition of the haulage sector to fossil-free fuels.

The overall goal is to reduce port-related emissions by 70 per cent by 2030.

The Port of Gothenburg is the largest port in the Nordic Region with frequent arrivals and departures by sea and land. On the land side, nearly one million truck movements are made each year, of which nearly half are made at Stena Lines' Gothenburg-Kiel-terminal or at the Gothenburg RoRo Terminal.

'Green' trucks began to receive priority at the two terminals on January 1, 2022. With the new project in place, these vehicles will be allowed to bypass queues at the terminals. On entering terminals, the trucks will be guided directly to the vessel or to dedicated Green Priority collection and delivery spaces.

This applies to all trucks that are battery-powered or have a fuel-cell powertrain.

"With the Green Priority project, we offer defined efficiency benefits to companies that use electrically powered trucks – which is not only a boost for the companies, but also for our climate in the short, medium and long term," said Stena Line chief executive, Niclas Mårtensson.

Maria Franksen, Gothenburg RoRo Terminal chief executive, added: "The rationale behind the project is to demonstrate how the transition to fossil-free fuels can have a tangible impact on industry. Although the transition of the transport sector as a whole will require far more time and effort, with Green Priority we have a clear, readily accessible concept that's a significant step along the way."

ABOVE Fast-track 'green lanes' are now open for battery or fuel-cell powered vehicles

SCANIA BRINGS NEW HYBRIDS TO MARKET

Scania is introducing a new range of Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) trucks that can be fitted with different powertrain and charging options.

A new GE281 Gearbox Electric device works in tandem with a Scania 7- or 9-litre combustion engine to enable fossil-free transport for heavy trucks with demanding bodywork.

The new hybrid powertrain has been developed in-house according to Scania's modular requirements.

The GE281 Gearbox Electric device works by coupling two electric motors with each other and merging them with parts of Scania's latest Opticruise gearbox. This, said the manufacturer, delivers seamless power transmission and capacity for dealing with gvws of up to 36 tonnes without support from the combustion engine.

Since the electric drive is always supporting the combustion engine at take-off and acceleration, the combustion engine can be downsized in both volume and power output.

Scania reckons this hybridisation means fuel savings of up to 40 per cent in city areas compared with traditional diesel powertrains.

"The GE281 is something brand new in the heavy truck industry," said Fredrik Allard, SVP and head of e-mobility at Scania. "These new hybrids have the capacity for taking on a multitude of tasks and will come out on top in all kinds of relevant comparisons."

The latest hybrid truck generation from Scania can be ordered as HEVs or PHEVs available in P-, G- and L-series cabs, spec'd as rigids or tractors.

The 7-litre DC07 and 9-litre DC09 combustion engines are each available in three power outputs. All Scania Euro 6 engines can run on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), and some can also run on biodiesel FAME.

GE281 offers 230 kW continuously and 290 kW as peak power output, while the max torque is 2100 Nm. It has six forward gears, but no traditional clutch. Instead, it uses a planetary gear for interruption-free gear shifts. This also provides for creep drive capabilities at low speeds, and the PTO can be used while the truck is moving in both electric and combustion engine modes.

"The driving experience can actually be compared with what you get in a passenger car with a dual-clutch system," said Allard. "And with this, we can offer adaptive cruise control with active prediction and downhill speed control."

ABOVE Scania's fourth-generation of hybrid trucks make use of new Gearbox Electric technology

NEWS IN BRIEF

Aztek's record-breaker

Pallet-Track member Aztek Logistics reckons it has recorded its busiest-ever month in nearly 20 years of business. In the face of tough trading conditions caused by the pandemic and Brexit, the Letchworth-based logistics firm announced it achieved a record month in November, seeing a 34.3 per cent increase from the same month last year. Aztek said it has seen steady and sustainable growth in its customer base throughout 2021, which enabled it to continue to offer its FORS Gold-standard service to both long-standing and new customers. "November was a fantastic month for us and a real testament to the hard work everyone has been putting in to deliver a quality service," said managing director, Stuart Charter. "We've been very mindful of our growth, ensuring it's carried out at a pace we can meet. It's always inspiring to look back to 2003 and see just how far we've come from being one man and a van to a fleet of 40, managing 10,000 pallet movements in one month," he concluded.

DWP's connected trailers

DWP & Sons has extended its fleet with seven refrigerated trailers from Schmitz Cargobull, featuring TrailerConnect telematics system to ensure complete cold chain visibility. The new assets join a 27-strong Schmitz trailer fleet comprising 20 reefers, four Euroliners and three box trailers, which transport fresh and frozen produce across the UK, Europe and Asia from DWP & Sons' base in Stoke-on-Trent. TrailerConnect telematics enables the operator to monitor all variables on each trailer from a single dashboard – including internal temperature, tyre condition and door security – and the system sends SMS or email alerts in case of security concerns. Currently, two of DWP's trailers are being used to advertise Stoke-on-Trent's cultural and heritage attractions with eye-catching liveries designed by the local council. There are plans for Stoke City Football Club to wrap a third trailer in its colours. Expected to remain in operation for four years, the new trailers will be used seven days a week, 365 days a year, and will predominately be pulled by DAF XF tractor units.

ACTROS EDITION 2 FLAGSHIP FINDS ITS WAY TO MAZE

Maze Logistic Solutions has just taken delivery of an exclusive Actros Edition 2 from Mercedes-Benz to celebrate its 10th year in business.

Maze specialises in container movements and works for several shipping lines and blue-chip freight forwarders. It also provides warehousing, distribution and specialist haulage services, and offers bespoke supply chain management support.

The Ipswich-based operator has relied on highly spec'd Mercs since it was established in 2011. Today, Actros tractor units with range-topping GigaSpace cabs account for all but nine of the 26 trucks on a fleet.

Just 400 Actros Edition 2s have been built for customers worldwide, and of these only a handful reached the UK.

The appearance of Maze Logistic Solutions' truck is enhanced by sideskirts, paintwork with colour-coded bumpers in Moonstone Grey, and two sets of Lightfix lightbars supplied and fitted by Kuda Automotive.

It also wears an unusual, high-impact livery applied by Chapple Signs of Stowmarket, which incorporates black reflective elements that become photo-luminescent in the dark.

The subject of a flexible Agility funding agreement from Mercedes-Benz Finance, Maze Logistics Solutions' truck is a 2553 variant powered by a 530 bhp, 12.8-litre in-line six-cylinder engine.

"We've not stopped throughout the pandemic," said Maze director, Ryan Jiggens. "The Actros is a great looking truck and equipped to a very high standard, both outside and in.

"Throughout our 10 years in business we have been very conscious of the needs of our drivers, and have chosen ever higher vehicle specifications as we've looked to enhance their driving experiences while simultaneously supporting our retention programme and building upon the company's well-regarded reputation," he concluded.

ABOVE Maze's Edition 2 Actros features photo-luminescent elements to catch the eye after dark

Power-packed C520 tippers top out for Yuill & Dodds

Scottish haulier Yuill & Dodds has put five Renault Trucks C520 rigid tippers into service over the last 12 months, with its latest C520.32 8x4 RK chassis being direct replacements for a similar group of 520 bhp Renaults that had entered service during 2017.

Supplied by Renault Trucks Scotland at Bellshill, the 5.6 m wheelbase rigids feature all-round parabolic steel spring suspension and offer generous ground clearance when laden.

Yuill & Dodds favours high-power, high-specification eight-wheeled tippers. The latest C520s continue the theme with DTI 13 engines producing a max of 512 bhp between 1430-1800 rpm, which is complemented by a top torque of 2550 Nm from 1000-1430 rpm.

A 12-speed Optidriver gearbox and PMR 2191 double-reduction drive axles with a ratio of 3.70:1 complete the powertrains.

The operator opted for PPG bulk alloy bodies, along with Binotto hydraulics, PM onboard weighing equipment and Harsh electric slide-and-go automatic sheeting systems.

Benefitting from a full-life Renault R&M maintenance package carried out at the nearby Bellshill dealership, the firm anticipates a three- or four-year retention period for the new tippers.

"The C520 tippers are delivering good performance to date and they have plenty of power on tap, in addition to a chassis that's tough enough for the job," said MD, Brian Yuill.

"The trucks carry out bulk bales and soil movements across Scotland and it's likely they'll work further afield if our customers ask."

To accommodate long-distance jobs, the C520 rigids all come with sleeper cabs including four-point air suspension and a ride height control system. Air-suspended drivers' seats with heating and ventilation are joined by Performance interior finishes.

Yuill & Dodds' blue, red and white livery has been used for several decades. AST Signs provided the cab wraps for the new tippers. Silver finish mirror covers, air horns and flashing beacons provide some smart finishing touches.

ABOVE Scottish operator favours top-power tippers

TOAST OF THE TOWN

Gower Brewery has added a new FUSO Canter to its fleet to replace its first model, which proved ultra-reliable. Established in 2011, Gower employs traditional methods to produce handcrafted, premium-quality ales at its base on the Crofty Industrial Estate in Pen-clawdd, South Wales.

Like its predecessor, which had been in service since 2013, the company's new Canter has a gross weight of 7.5 tonnes. As a 7C15 variant, it is powered by a 3.0-litre common-rail turbodiesel engine producing 150 bhp and 370 Nm of torque. The truck has a cab roof-mounted air deflector while its body, which features strikingly printed curtains, is by Fred Smith & Sons of West Bromwich.

Also fitted are a Dhollandia column tail-lift with 1000 kg capacity and a CameraMatics system that provides 360-degree visibility for enhanced safety.

The Canter was supplied by Mercedes-Benz Trucks dealer, Euro Commercials. Merc's dealer network also sells and supports the FUSO Canter range in Britain.

Gower's new Canter was taken with a Complete Service Contract and will be inspected and maintained by the workshop team at the dealer's Swansea branch.

The Canter makes next-day deliveries of Gower Brewery's beers in bottles, kegs and casks, primarily to pubs, but also to smaller supermarkets and other retailers within an 80-mile radius of its base. Many are located in the Gower Peninsula, the UK's first designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The 7.5-tonne Canter offers a significant body and payload allowance of up to a tonne more than some rival products in the same gross weight segment. It also has a compact 3400 mm wheelbase – second-shortest of the four available for the 7C15 – and tight turning circle.

"The previous Canter carried a full 4.0 tonnes," said Gower co-founder, Chris Mabbett. "Its heavier body means the new truck has a slightly reduced payload of 3.7 tonnes, but that's still a lot more than we'd get on most competitors' chassis."

Walton waltzes back to MAN for TG trio

Family-owned specialist corn and animal feed merchant H Walton Ltd of Old Goole, East Yorkshire has recently taken delivery of its first New Generation MAN trucks.

The new vehicles, decked out in traditional livery, will work across the business delivering a wide range of bagged and bulk feeds, fertilisers and wood pellets throughout the Midlands and into the Scottish Borders.

The three new vehicles, each individually specified to suit the needs of the business, comprise two 44-tonne TGX tractors (26.510 and 24.510), and a 26-tonne TGS rigid (26.360).

The TGX 26.510 6x2 features GM cab, additional sat nav and fridge, and will predominantly pull a curtainsider delivering bagged goods to customers.

Fitted with a 19.5-inch mid-lift axle, the TGX 24.510 also has a GM sleeper cab and is equipped with NTX/10c gearbox-driven PTO, which drives a Priden Engineering cooler pack to supply power and drive to a new Priden monocoque plank side bulk-blower trailer.

Both vehicles have been specified with MAN's EfficientRoll system which, via GPS data, automatically shifts the automated gearbox into neutral on downhill gradients.

The three-axle 26-tonne TGS 26.360 6x2-4 rigid features a high-roof TM cab and has a 5900 mm wheelbase, which accommodates an 8.2 m curtainside body and Moffett Mounty with a custom-built tray mounted into the sub-frame.

It also features a lift-and-steer rear axle to reduce turning circle and improve traction on the drive axle on challenging surfaces.

"In our business, we don't have the luxury of one-size-fits-all and that's why each of our new vehicles offers a different solution," said business director, David Walton. "Most of our delivery points are to individual farms, and at times access can be tricky.

"The rigid with its lifting axle and Moffett Mounty will be a real asset, ensuring we deliver our feeds and meals to the exact point they are needed and, at the same time put less stress on the driver.

"In terms of efficiency and fuel consumption, we've seen and heard a lot of good things about the new generation MANs, so we're very much looking forward to seeing how they perform as they bed in. So far, early indications are indeed very positive," he concluded.

ABOVE Firm has spec'd three different New Gen TG models to ensure maximum operating efficiency

BLAKEMORE BUYS FMs FOR 'FUTURE-PROOF' DVS DELIVERIES

Ten new Volvo FM 6x2 tractor units have been delivered into AF Blakemore & Son's food distribution fleet, each meeting Transport for London's three-star Direct Vision Standard (DVS) rating.

The 44-tonne FMs will work predominantly on a contract delivering ambient, fresh and frozen goods to supermarket chain, Spar. Supplied by Hartshorne Group, the FMs are powered by Volvo's D11K Euro 6 engine delivering 460 bhp and 2200 Nm of torque.

"These new FMs are superb trucks – ideal for our distribution work and they fit perfectly into our operation," said Blakemore's logistics compliance manager, Dave Higgs.

The interior of the latest FM features a new dashboard offering more storage space, new colours and a modern dynamic digital display.

In addition, each is fitted with Volvo's Long Haul Fuel package including I-See predictive cruise control and 12-speed I-Shift automated transmission.

AF Blakemore & Son has specified the 10 trucks with multiple cameras which can be viewed through the driver's 9-inch side display, plus an added window in the passenger door to further improve safety and ensure they are three-star DVS rated for working in central London.

These complement the new cab's raised A-pillars, combined with a large windscreen, low door line and modern mirrors, which deliver improved all-round visibility.

"We've gone for three-star compliant trucks as forward planning on our part because I believe the DVS scheme will be rolled out across more cities sooner rather than later," Higgs said. "These vehicles are on a seven-year contract hire agreement, so we're future-proofing our fleet."

Working in tandem with double-deck urban trailers, the FMs are expected to clock up around 120,000 km per annum. Each new truck is backed with a seven-year Volvo Gold Contract, with servicing and maintenance work carried out by Hartshorne's mechanics at Blakemore's onsite Vehicle Maintenance Unit, at its Willenhall depot.

ABOVE Operator spec'd three-star FMs as he believes DVS "will be rolled out in more cities sooner rather than later"

NEWS IN BRIEF

Roads to recovery

Kent roads covering 45 miles have been resurfaced with 500,000 m² of asphalt as part of a £30 million investment in more sustainable works. Some of the major stretches resurfaced recently include the A290 Tile Kiln Hill, Canterbury; A206 Crossways Boulevard, Dartford; A2034 Cheriton Road, Folkestone; and the A247 Sutton Road, Maidstone. Resurfacing work was completed by contractor GW Highways and should increase the life of these roads by up to 25 years. The Kent-based firm was awarded the contract for up to four years in January. The programme also included 2650 m² of concrete road reconstruction, including A227 Wrotham Road in Gravesend and Brunswick Road, B2229 Brookfield Road and Henwood Industrial Estate in Ashford. The £30 million resurfacing works are part of the council's wider £50 million annual road maintenance budget. This sees £10 million spent on extending the life of around one million square metres of road. A further £10 million Pothole Blitz campaign is focusing on larger, longer-lasting local repairs.

Trucking Home for Christmas

Any truck driver who fancied a cuppa and a mince pie over Christmas could get one for free, thanks to DAF Trucks. As part of a nationwide thank-you for drivers' hard work in 2021, truckers were able to claim a free drink and snack from one of eight UK truck stops. These included Avon Lodge Truckstop, Avonmouth; Junction 29 Truckstop, Chesterfield and Lymm Truckwash. In addition, Roadking, Cannock; Ashford International Truckstop and Chippenham Pitstop were also involved. Finally, Ulceby Truckstop, Immingham and Lockerbie Lorry Park also signed up to the offer. Meanwhile, DAF Trucks also created a Christmas choir made up of DAF employees, drivers and those from the dealer network. It released *Trucking Home for Christmas* – a cover version of the Chris Rea song. It was released in support of The Drivers Fund, a not-for-profit organisation supporting drivers and their families who are facing financial difficulties.

Drivers urged to go hands-free in new mobile phone crackdown

Laws surrounding the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving have been strengthened to allow for easier prosecutions of drivers by police.

Drivers holding phones to take photos or videos, change music or play videos or games – even in stationary traffic or at traffic lights – now face a £200 fixed penalty notice and six points on their licence.

Research from driver training provider TTC shows more than 600,000 drivers on Britain's roads currently have six or more points on their licence – meaning just one incident of being caught holding a mobile phone would be enough to put them off the road.

As a result, drivers are being urged to avoid prosecution by installing a hands-free cradle in their vehicles – or better still, put mobile phones away entirely.

"Although the existing laws surrounding mobile phone use are robust and designed to keep road-users safe from dangerous or distracted drivers, from January, these have been further tightened to include holding a mobile phone device to use sat nav, change music or take photos," said TTC's Andy Wheeler.

"This change in laws is coming at a time when we already have a significant number of drivers approaching a ban due to an accumulation of points. The coming introduction will see these drivers at serious risk from being removed from the roads for a single, if serious, infraction," he concluded.

ABOVE New laws are intended to make it easier for police to prosecute drivers caught using mobiles while at the wheel

CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO HALT RISING THREAT OF DRUG DRIVING

Independent charity Crimestoppers has launched a new national campaign to target those who get behind the wheel and drug drive.

It comes as new statistics show drug driving reports Crimestoppers received anonymously that are passed on to law enforcement have risen from 5028 (April 2018-March 2019) to 10,580 (April 2020-March 2021) – a 110 per cent increase over three years.

One in 20 fatalities on UK roads is caused by drug drivers. There have been significant rises in arrests for drug driving in some areas, such as in the North West. This includes 2020 figures from Cumbria Police, who recorded 883 drug driving arrests – twice the number for drink driving (437) in the same period.

Crimestoppers' campaign highlights how drug drivers put not only their own, but also other people's lives at risk. The charity is urging people to speak up about regular drug drivers, as this information helps prevent potential damaging or fatal collisions from happening.

Crimestoppers is independent of the police and guarantees complete anonymity to more than 1500 people who contact the charity each day. This promise has been kept since the charity began back in the late 1980s, helping to give a voice to the fifth of people it's estimated who refuse to speak to the police.

The charity has teamed up with D.tec International, which supplies DrugWipe – and instant-readout disposable drug detection device which is used extensively for roadside driver drug screening by all 43 police forces across the UK.

"This appeal and campaign to raise awareness will help tackle the false belief it's only drink drivers who can be easily detected," said Mick Duthie, director of operations, Crimestoppers.

"We aim to discourage those who may be thinking of getting behind the wheel and ensure they think about the implications of their actions on themselves, their families and the loved ones of potential victims."

ABOVE D.tec's DrugWipe device is being used by police across the UK to test drivers at the roadside

Search is on for Liquid Fuels Tanker Driver of the Year

Trade association UKIFDA (the UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association) has launched its annual search for the finest tanker driver at work in the UK's liquid fuels distribution industry.

The 2022 competition is already underway and aims to find the tanker driver who exemplifies what is best about the industry.

This year the judges are looking for the tanker driver who consistently upholds the highest working standards.

"We are so proud to be launching our Driver of the Year 2022 search as it is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the absolute best of the best," said Ken Cronin, UKIFDA chief exec.

"When you think back to the past couple of years, we have all faced many challenges because of the Covid pandemic and our UKIFDA members are no exception to this, as they have continued to deliver vital fuels to homes and businesses regardless of the pandemic pressures, extreme weather conditions or fuel crisis."

To enter the competition, drivers must be a UKIFDA member and hold a clean, valid driving licence. They must also be incident and conviction free for at least two years. There can only be one entry per depot.

The winner will receive the title of Driver of the Year 2022, £1000 prize money and a certificate. They will be presented with their award during UKIFDA EXPO 2022 at the Exhibition Centre Liverpool, which takes place on April 27-18.

Nominations can be sent to UKIFDA before February 28, 2022. Application forms are available from the member area at https://ukifda.org

ABOVE UKIFDA is looking for the tanker driver who's the best of the best

7 out of 10 Brits scared to drive in snowy conditions

ABOVE Snow can cause chaos for British drivers

While Britons regularly battle ever-changing weather conditions, snow can throw a major spanner in the works.

With the Met Office reporting the UK averages a mere "15.6 days a year when snow is on the ground, compared to 26.2 days in Scotland," it's no wonder the country comes to a standstill.

But as Britons are underprepared to take on these conditions, more pressure is put on drivers who brave the elements. Indeed, a recent survey by vehicle finance company Carvine found a staggering 69 per cent of the 3500 respondents were afraid to drive in the snow.

Unlike motorists living in Sweden, Canada and Switzerland who are well versed in driving in the snow, Britons are often faced with other challenges.

Due to the UK's wet and relatively warm climate, snow rarely sticks to the ground. Instead of firm, crunchy snow that's firmer underfoot, slushy, slippery conditions are far more likely.

In addition, the UK has one of the lowest uptakes in winter or all-weather tyres in Europe.

"Our recent survey shows how ill-equipped UK drivers are to take on more challenging conditions on the road," said Carvine's Alex Thomas. "As snow is so rare, it's no surprise.

"But if motorists are willing to do basic winter checks and invest in some specialist equipment if they live in heavier snowfall areas, getting stuck in the snow will be less likely."

AA poll finds most drivers use out of date atlases

Most drivers are not updating their road atlases often enough to keep up with changing travel infrastructure, an AA survey has revealed.

In a Yonder poll of over 15,000 drivers, nearly one in five admitted they have never updated their road atlas, while 11 per cent take more than five years to purchase a new edition.

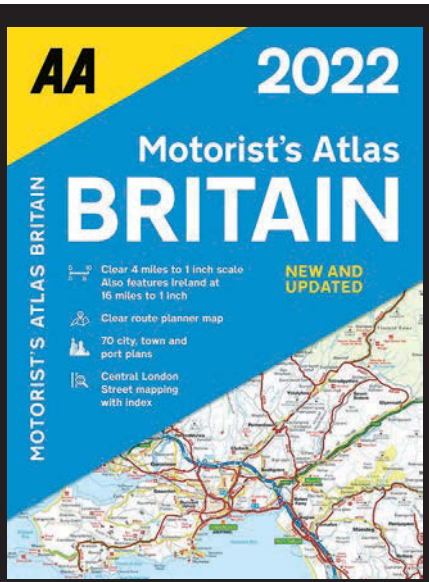
Although a further 18 per cent of those surveyed update theirs every three years, only seven per cent renew their road atlas every year, as recommended by the AA.

Drivers in Northern Ireland and Scotland were least likely to have renewed their road atlas, with 21 per cent and 20 per cent of those surveyed in those areas respectively saying they still had their originally purchased edition.

Motorists in the East and West Midlands emerged as the most mindful when it comes to keeping their atlases up to date, with nine per cent of respondents in those regions getting new editions each year.

"With the country's infrastructure always evolving, including the introduction of smart motorways and changes to tolls and restrictions, we encourage drivers to keep their atlases up to date so they are never caught out when on the roads," said Simon Numphud, MD, AA Media.

Edmund King, AA President, added: "Despite the advent of the sat nav, atlases are still an essential in-vehicle item alongside the ice-scraper or torch. When roads are blocked following an incident, many sat navs just try to re-route back onto the blocked road, whereas the atlas can show you alternative routes."



NEWS IN BRIEF

Electric demand

Renault Trucks' manufacturing site at Blainville-sur-Orne – the first European plant to manufacture series-production electric trucks – is staffing up to meet increased demand for electric vehicles. The plant is looking to increase its workforce by 100 operators on permanent contracts in 2022 for the production of medium-duty electric and diesel trucks. These 100 new recruits will join the 1546 employees on permanent contracts at the Normandy site. The Blainville-sur-Orne plant has been mass-producing medium-duty electric trucks since 2020. In 2021, in response to the growing demand for electric vehicles, it adapted its manufacturing facilities and increased production capacity. The plant plans to produce a couple of thousand units per year.

New Canters in build

Daimler Truck subsidiary FUSO has started production of the latest generation FUSO Canter in Europe. The light-duty truck is now rolling off the production line in the FUSO plant in Tramagal, Portugal. The new model comes with a redesigned cabin, as well as improvements in safety and comfort. A newly developed compact exhaust system means the light-duty truck now also meets Euro 6 Step E emissions regulations. The new FUSO Canter has been available to order through the FUSO retail network across Europe since August 2021. "Since its market launch in 1963, over 4.5 million FUSO Canter have been produced worldwide," said Philipp Panter, head of sales, marketing & customer service, FUSO Europe. "With the start of production, we look forward to offer our European customers a major upgrade in safety, comfort and a new modern cabin design."

IVECO & PLUS TEAM UP FOR AUTONOMOUS TRUCKING TRIAL

Tests will see Plus' autonomous driving tech installed into an S-WAY tractor unit

Iveco has joined self-driving truck technology provider Plus as its European partner for the launch of an autonomous trucking pilot in Europe and China.

This first joint trial will test and demonstrate the performance of Plus's integrated system in an Iveco S-WAY across a wide range of environments and driving conditions. This level of comprehensive testing, using both the driver-on-board PlusDrive solution and Level 4 autonomous driving technology, will help gather data and validate the design integral to S-WAY autonomous production.

"As the only autonomous trucking technology company that has already started delivering a commercial product to customers in the heavy-haulage sector, Plus has developed a clear and compelling strategy to launch a driver-in solution first and then a Level 4 autonomous truck," said Marco Liccardo, designated chief technology & digital officer of Iveco Group.

"This is in line with our customer-centric view of a more automated and safe truck aiming at improving productivity and reducing operating costs."

Shawn Kerrigan, COO and co-founder of Plus, added: "We have always emphasised the need for expansive testing to prove an autonomous driving system is able to handle diverse weather, terrains and driving scenarios. This pilot will accelerate our efforts to start production of autonomous trucks that combine Plus's production-ready, high-performance, full-stack Level 4 autonomous driving technology with Iveco's deep engineering expertise and focus on safety and sustainability."

Daimler details new scalable self-driving truck platform

Daimler Truck is developing a scalable autonomous truck platform suited for SAE Level 4 autonomous driving, including redundancy systems needed to achieve safe and reliable operations.

The four key areas with a redundant architecture are the braking system, steering system, low-voltage power net and network communications. In case any of the primary systems encounter a fault, the Level 4 autonomous vehicle will be able to monitor, assess and deploy back-up systems to control the truck safely.

The theory is that if a fault is deemed critical to the operation of the vehicle, the autonomous driving system will allow the truck to follow a safety protocol and be able to execute a 'minimal risk manoeuvre' to come to a safe stop.

Daimler Truck said its Level 4 HGV platform is based on Freightliner's Cascadia and aims to set new industry standards. The unique redundant truck chassis is being developed for Waymo Via based on its specifications.

A first version of the truck was delivered in 2021 for integration of autonomous driving system, Waymo Driver.

"Every smart autonomous driving system needs a strong foundation," said Dr Peter Vaughan Schmidt, head of autonomous technology group at Daimler Truck.

"Our Level 4 vehicle platform based on the Freightliner Cascadia… can significantly contribute to enhancing safety in traffic thanks to its redundancy of systems and a multitude of sensors.

"It brings us much closer to our vision of accident-free driving," he concluded.

Chinese truck engine-maker joins with Jacob for braking power

Jacobs Vehicle Systems has been appointed by China's Weichai Power Co. to supply engine brake components for two new heavy-duty truck diesel engines.

Weichai's 13-litre WP13H and 15-litre WP15H engines recently went into production at the company's plant in Weifang, central Shandong province. Both feature Jacobs' Compression Release Brake.

The WP13H, which produces 552 bhp and 2600 Nm of torque, is intended primarily for use in long-haul tractor units. The WP15H, which makes up to 660 bhp and 3200 Nm of torque, is designed for long-haul tractors and large goods transportation trucks.

Ten years ago, Weichai embarked on a $5 billion research and development programme to pioneer China's design and manufacture of engines which meet China VI emissions levels.

Weichai's 400,000th China VI engine rolled off the production line in August 2021.

A year before reaching this landmark, Weichai claimed its new WP13H would be the world's first commercial diesel engine with a brake thermal efficiency greater than 50 per cent.

The Jacobs Compression Release Brake takes the load off the friction brakes, turning the power-producing diesel engine into a power-absorbing air compressor by using a compression-release mechanism.

This decompression device works by opening the exhaust valves near the top of the compression stroke, releasing the highly compressed air through the exhaust system. Little energy is returned to the piston, and as the cycle repeats, the kinetic energy of the truck's forward motion is dissipated.

Jacobs said compression release brakes are typically capable of meeting 85 per cent of a vehicle's braking needs.

ABOVE WP13H engine is rated at 552 bhp

DAF bags new order from Belgian Defence

CF Military chassis and driveline have been co-developed by TATRA

Belgian Defence has placed a new order with DAF for nine heavy tractor/trailer combinations for the safe and swift recovery of vehicles in zones of operations and conflict.

The new vehicles are scheduled to be delivered in 2024 and follow a previous order placed by Belgian Defence for 879 all-wheel drive 4x4 and 8x8 CF Military trucks, set for delivery between 2022 and 2025.

The order is for complete combinations consisting of four-axle and all-wheel driven CF Military tractors and thee-axle, extendable flatbed semi-trailers from Broshuis.

The tractors will be fitted with a state-of-the-art armoured cab that offers maximum protection to the occupants when transporting and evacuating vehicles during military operations.

DAF is working closely with TATRA Trucks in the Czech Republic to produce a unique chassis concept and driveline, central backbone tube and independent suspension of half-axles. The set-up should offer CF Military better off-road capabilities and boosted driver comfort, even on the most challenging terrain.

The recovery vehicles will be powered by 12.9-litre PACCAR MX-13 engines rated at 460 bhp.

Armoured cabs will be supplied by TATRA Defence Vehicles using components from the cabs of DAF's CF series produced in Belgium.

Belgian Defence and DAF said they will collaborate to take care of the maintenance of the CF Military combinations, leveraging DAF's dealer network in Belgium.

"This second order is further proof DAF is also capable of providing advanced transport solutions for military applications," said Harry Wolters, president of DAF Trucks.

"We look forward to making the unique quality of DAF CF Military trucks available to other armed forces as well in the future."

HOLIDAYS

Restrictions on truck movements may be applicable in the following countries on the dates listed, in addition to any weekend bans on truck movements:

Estonia	February 24
Germany	February 28
Kosovo	February 17
Liechtenstein	February 2
Lithuania	February 16
Malta	February 10
Norway	February 13
San Marino	February 5
Serbia	February 15/16
Slovenia	February 8
Spain	February 28

DIESEL PRICES

The Automobile Association's monthly price guide to diesel prices around Europe

Country	Pence/ litre	Euro/ litre
Austria	118.5	01.42
Belgium	137.2	01.64
Czech Rep	120.3	01.44
Denmark	128.2	01.54
Estonia	114.5	01.37
Finland	139.7	01.67
France	130.3	01.56
Germany	130.7	01.57
Greece	126.8	01.52
The Netherlands	137.1	01.64
Hungary	109.0	01.31
Ireland	137.0	01.64
Italy	135.8	01.63
Latvia	112.8	01.35
Lithuania	115.0	01.38
Luxembourg	114.3	01.37
Norway	141.7	01.70
Poland	109.7	01.31
Portugal	128.0	01.53
Slovakia	117.4	01.41
Slovenia	120.8	01.45
Spain	115.0	01.38
Sweden	152.6	01.83
Switzerland	148.1	01.77
UK	149.6	01.79

SUPER range features new 13-litre engines

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

We talk to Vincente Connolly, Scania's UK sales director, about the manufacturer's new SUPER range, the future of its legendary V8, alternative drivelines and more…

By Steve Banner
PHOTOGRAPHY SCANIA

Vincente Connolly is a lucky man. As Scania's UK sales director, he has been tasked with extolling the virtues of the new SUPER, with a promised, healthy fuel saving of at least eight per cent along with a host of innovative features. So the omens are looking good as the country hopefully emerges from the coronavirus pandemic, despite rising prices and long lead times across the industry.

"We're really excited about the SUPER," he enthuses. "It will deliver fuel efficiency not yet seen on UK roads."

Scania SUPER's new 13-litre diesel is said to be responsible for approaching six per cent of the promised saving when compared with the outgoing 13-litre. It is initially available at 420, 460, 500 and 560 bhp, with torque outputs of 2300, 2500, 2650 and 2800 Nm respectively. Connolly believes the 460 bhp engine will turn out to be the best seller, but suspects the 560 bhp variant will be a very popular option. "I'm incredibly impressed by it," he smiles. "We've got the first of our SUPER demonstrators available at our customer support centre at Milton Keynes."

Scania SUPERs should be on the road with hauliers by April. Featuring new gearboxes and axles, Scania SUPER is being marketed with an optional Compression Release Brake auxiliary braking system, and with optional Scania Mirror View Camera digital mirrors. The latter had yet to be approved by UK authorities at the time of writing, with Scania reporting talks are "ongoing". It is hoping to have them released on this side of the Channel during the second half of the year.

800 bhp V8?

So where does all this talk about the six-cylinder 13-litre leave the legendary 770 bhp V8? Late 2020 saw its ongoing popularity

among truck aficionados evidenced by the clamour for the V8-powered *Flying Griffin* limited-edition tractor unit. Just 16 examples were released for the UK. "They were all sold within less than six hours," Connolly says.

So might Scania go the whole hog and introduce the V8 at a barnstorming 800 bhp, thereby offering the most-powerful production truck on the highway? "The engine has got more to give, but we don't plan to increase power output unless we see a practical need," he replies.

To which the answer might be that precious few operators have a practical need for 770 bhp either, and that boosting horsepower by just 30 bhp would have customers queuing round the block. "That's not a motivation for us," he states. "There would have to be a reason or requirement before we went to 800 bhp."

Environmental considerations

Promoting an 800 bhp diesel might also run counter to the rising swing in favour of zero-emission powertrains and the need to be seen to be green. "I believe we are at a watershed moment in the UK in terms of an awareness of the importance of sustainability and our responsibility to the planet," Connolly observes.

"More and more of our customers are taking these concerns very seriously. Scania is dedicated to driving the shift towards a sustainable transport system, but there is no one silver bullet that addresses every concern, and there won't necessarily be a single long-term winner," he adds. "Furthermore, not all of these technologies are moving at the same pace."

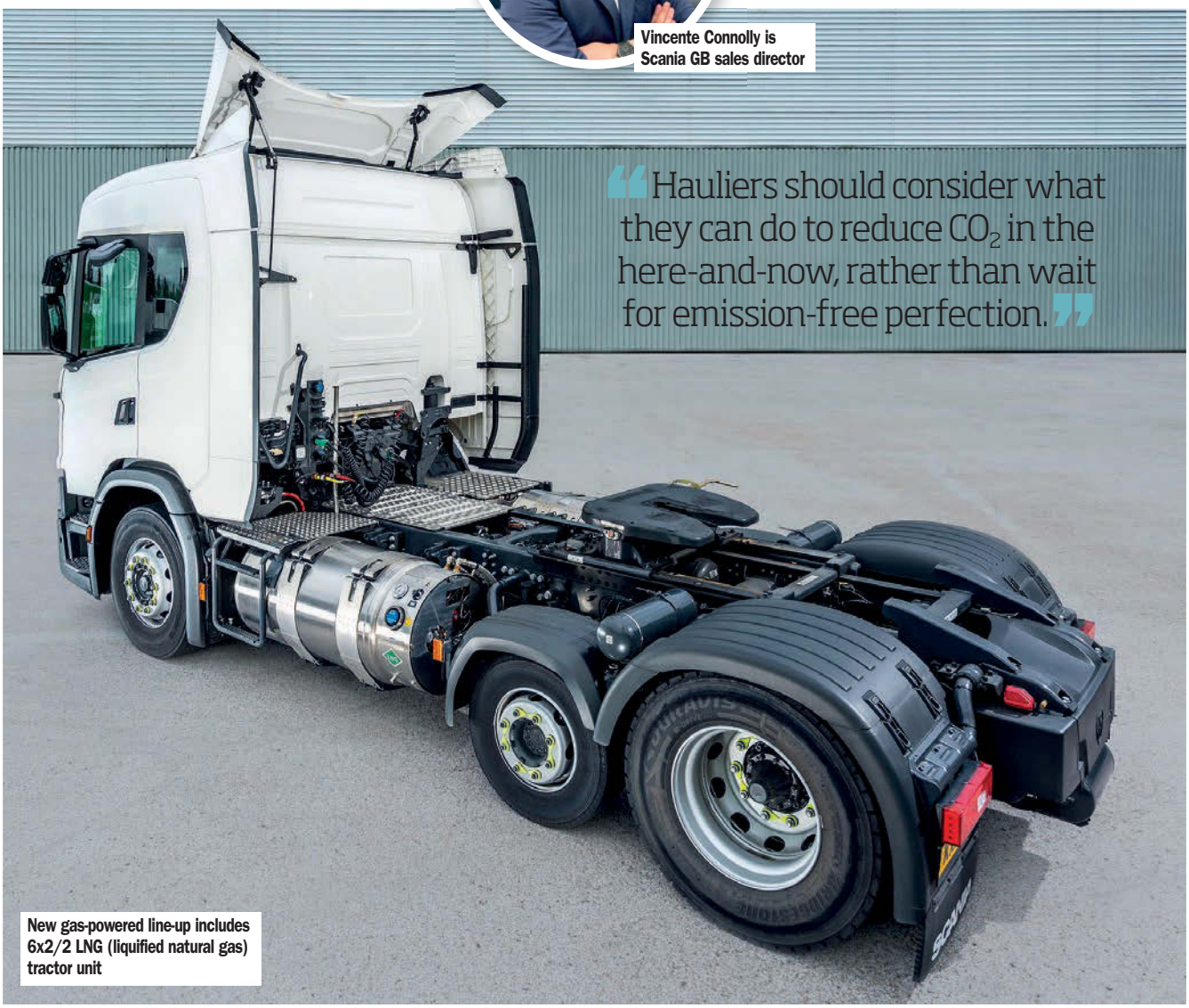
Connolly believes hauliers should consider what they can do to reduce their environmental impact in the here-and-now, rather than wait for emission-free perfection. "One thing many operators can do immediately is switch from ordinary diesel to HVO – hydrotreated vegetable oil," he points out. All versions of Scania's new 13-litre can run on it.

Classed as a paraffinic diesel, HVO is made from renewable waste materials such as vegetable and animal fats. Its supporters contend it can slash well-to-wheel CO_2 emissions by 90 per cent or more. "It's not a zero-emission solution, but it's an easy first step to take," he says. "Many businesses could also consider switching to biodiesel, which might potentially be made from their own products."

Used cooking oil is one of the best-known examples. The 460 and 500 bhp versions of the 13-litre can be ordered for use with biodiesel.

"Biogas is also worth thinking about if you're engaged in regional or long-haul operations," ➤

Vincente Connolly is Scania GB sales director



> "Hauliers should consider what they can do to reduce CO_2 in the here-and-now, rather than wait for emission-free perfection."

New gas-powered line-up includes 6x2/2 LNG (liquified natural gas) tractor unit

Connolly suggests. "Again, it's a here-and-now solution." Scania produces trucks that can run on CNG (compressed natural gas) or LNG (liquified natural gas), both of which can be made from sustainable resources.

Last autumn witnessed the launch of a 6x2 LNG tractor unit fitted with a lightweight Hendrickson centre lift-axle. "A major high-street brand has just ordered it in significant numbers," Connolly reports. "It features two LNG tanks: 187 litres/73 kg on the offside and 313 litres/122 kg on the nearside. While the actual range will be dependent on a variety of operational factors, our trials have shown distances of in excess of 400 miles are available."

Scania can offer two-, three- and four-axle rigids that can be configured to operate on either LNG or CNG. It also lists 4x2 CNG tractor units as well as 4x2 and 6x2 LNG models. Gas engine power outputs are 280 bhp or 340 bhp at 9.3-litres, and 410 bhp at 12.7-litres.

Electric drivelines

However, zero-emission battery-electric traction is likely to come to dominate short-haul transport in urban areas, he believes. "Its adoption is something we would strongly encourage and we've got fully electric 18- and 26-tonners available now," he says. "We've also got an electric tractor unit operating in northern Europe, and we'll have one in the UK in the next 18 to 24 months."

Battery technology is continuing to develop which should result in ranges lengthening – which will make it easier for electric trucks to venture beyond urban areas – and charging times shortening. "So far as an electric tractor unit is concerned, what you need is a minimum range of 350 km," says Connolly.

"Ideally what you want to be able to do is fully recharge the batteries in 45 minutes, while the driver takes his statutory break," he continues. "You can't do that if there is no supporting infrastructure though, and I think we as a country need to get real about the provision of service stations with facilities for drivers, including charging points.

"You won't be able to recharge your truck when you are resting if the only option available to you is to pull up in a lay-by."

Charging options

In this context, it is worth noting Daimler Truck, Volvo Group and TRATON Group (which includes Scania and MAN) have

***Flying Griffin* Scania majors on luxury…**

Electric highway trials are underway in Europe, but costs would be 'eye-watering'

...plus plenty of Special Edition touches...

> "You won't be able to recharge your truck when you are resting if the only option available to you is to pull up in a lay-by." *Vincente Connolly*

recently signed a joint-venture agreement to set up a European charging network. It will be accessible to all makes of truck.

Mention should also be made of the much-publicised electric highway project, involving trials of battery trucks drawing power from overhead wires on short sections of motorway – something Scania is involved in.

Whether such a system could ever be developed for the entire UK is a discussion still to be had, agrees Connolly. The cost would be eye-watering and there would be a further complication, he points out. "What about trailer height?" he wonders. In mainland Europe, it is commonly set at 4 m. On this side of the Channel there is no restriction at all, which has obvious implications for overhead cable clearance.

Scania has even come up with hybrid and plug-in hybrid trucks, with the latter said to be capable of travelling 60 km on battery power alone.

Picking a path to Net Zero

How about hydrogen fuel cells? Scania has been involved in the development of a hydrogen fuel-cell refuse truck and has put fuel-cell 27-tonners into service with Norwegian grocery wholesaler ASKO, but clearly does not envisage the technology becoming mainstream for a while yet.

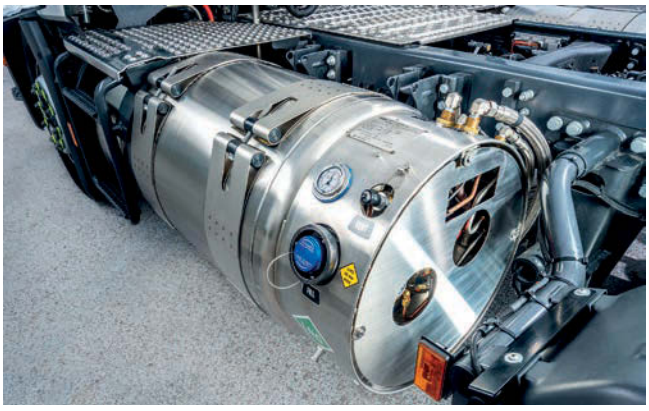
"Hydrogen offers real opportunities and can give both flexibility and range, but its widespread use is still some time away," Connolly contends. "I don't see it as an option in the short to medium term."

The growing range of alternative powertrain options is fast becoming a breeding ground of confusion for operators, who may be unsure which one to pick."There are so many different choices that it's easy to get lost, so we're sitting down with customers and talking about what we think may be feasible for their type of operation," Connolly says. "The majority of operators want to do something about their carbon footprint, but they also want to be profitable.

"We sat down with a couple of customers who were keen to go electric, but when we saw what they wanted to do with their vehicles we had to tell them it wasn't a viable choice." In those circumstances sticking with diesel engines, but running them on ➤

ABOVE ...and interior details that celebrate manufacturer's legendary V8

ABOVE Gas refuelling infrastructure is improving in the UK



ABOVE Gas-powered tractor features two LNG tanks

HVO, could be a better bet. Doing so means there is no need to go to the expense of installing charging points in your yard – and you can always switch back to standard diesel should HVO be unavailable.

Rising prices

High front-end prices are likely to prompt hauliers to hang onto their alternative-fuel-technology trucks for longer than they do at present. "You don't get the maximum benefit if you get rid of them after 24 months," Connolly remarks.

Trucks are rising in price anyway, no matter how they are powered, in line with a whole host of other products; and customers are having to wait many months before they can take delivery. While some hauliers may be able to get to grips with a Scania SUPER in the coming months, microchip shortages and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic mean most buyers who order a factory-built Scania may have to wait until the fourth quarter of this year before it arrives – or possibly until early 2023.

ABOVE Lead time for new trucks is hampered by semiconductor shortage

As a consequence, used prices have gone through the roof. Customers who cannot obtain new trucks want late-registered second-hand ones, but they are few and far between because the existing owners are hanging onto them until their new replacements arrive. It's a perfect storm.

Amid all this upheaval Scania is continuing to develop its dealer network. Last November saw the unveiling of the new £10m Scania Eurocentral dealership at Motherwell in Scotland on a 7.8-acre site.

ABOVE New flagship state-of-the-art service centre at Eurocentral

> "Used prices have gone through the roof. Customers who cannot obtain new trucks want late-registered second-hand ones, but they are few and far between."

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Noble Food's Mick Tucker reckons flexible working is key to attracting new drivers

THE ROAD TO CHANGE

Three ways operators can attract and retain first-class drivers amid the backdrop of the current skills shortage

By Mick Tucker, divisional transport manager, Noble Foods

PHOTOGRAPHY NOBLE FOODS

With the Road Haulage Association estimating there is a shortage of over 100,000 qualified HGV drivers in the UK, it's clear there's no one-size-fits-all solution to the rising crisis the industry faces. Despite the effects of the pandemic on supply chains, current drivers do not see Covid-19 as the main reason for these shortages – in fact, the same research shows Brexit and retirement were believed to be the most common factors.

Regardless of the cause, one thing is certain: businesses must focus on attracting new talent and retaining loyal employees by rethinking driver culture to plug the employment gap.

For many, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of looking after our mental and physical health, as well as the responsibility companies have in supporting their workforce, especially those on the front line.

As the people accountable for supplying the UK with essential goods, HGV drivers are the powerhouse behind business operations and their wellbeing must be prioritised. Here are three ways company leaders can reinvent their processes in light of the shortage, to create a future where drivers feel supported and motivated – even in times of crisis.

Start by putting flexibility first

The UK government has recently outlined proposals to make flexible working a day-one right for new employees in every sector. With the pandemic spotlighting the importance of spending time with loved ones and pursuing interests outside of work, recognising the need for flexibility is a welcome change. As HGV drivers cannot work from home, understanding their commitments and at-home situation is crucial to providing them with a tailored, flexible shift pattern. This way, those that want to be back in time to eat dinner with their families or take up a new hobby can do so, creating a better work-life balance and assuring drivers their personal needs are always being considered.

As well as getting to know their fleet and providing them with shift versatility, operators can also encourage flexibility through greater autonomy. Many drivers enjoy the freedom of not being managed daily, and this can be a big draw to the profession for people who want to feel like their own boss. By empowering drivers to make the right decisions for them, companies will be able to attract candidates and ensure their current employees feel supported and in control of their career.

ABOVE Noble Foods drivers Ian Franks and Paul White

The past 18 months have taught us all that life and work must work in tandem; and through promoting flexibility, the transport industry can take a crucial step towards retaining and recruiting talent.

Rewrite the stereotype

The average age of an HGV driver is 55 and it is often thought to be a largely male-dominated industry. Many are also retiring early or finding new careers in less intensive sectors. Alarmingly, the haulage industry consists of 85 per cent SMEs (small- and medium-sized enterprises), yet only 25 per cent of them employ apprentices of driver age, showing not enough is being done to entice and train younger generations into the profession.

Running an apprenticeship scheme also benefits employers by improving company productivity, showcasing new perspectives on existing operations, and retaining a cohort of employees that will hopefully continue working with the business for years to come. Although the law is changing to fast-track applicants to pass their HGV driving tests quicker, operators need to recruit from a more diverse pool of applicants, especially during this time of need.

At Noble Foods, we pride ourselves on employing drivers from all ages, genders and backgrounds. For example, Becky is one of our drivers who has been with us for nearly a year, delivering eggs for brands like the happy egg co. She loves the freedom of being out on the road and encourages women considering a career in driving to take the plunge and pursue it.

Noble Foods is passionate about giving everyone an equal opportunity to succeed in the haulage industry – that's why we are lucky enough to have employees who have worked with us for over 30 years, and even second-generation drivers. As well as welcoming people from all walks of life into our 184-strong fleet, we also want to cater to different personalities. For example, our daytime drivers are at the forefront of farmer relationships, so prefer spending time with people and curating a true bond with the agricultural community. Such interactions keep drivers motivated and help them to understand their essential role in the wider business. Therefore, operators must diversify their hiring strategies so they can appeal to a wider demographic, helping them find first-rate talent beyond traditional industry stereotypes.

Make training & wellbeing a priority

When recruiting and onboarding new hires, providing rigorous training is important for all businesses – but in the haulage industry, it is vital. Even though millions of pounds are being invested by the government into skills bootcamps for new drivers, companies must still carry out the necessary tests to protect and support recent recruits. Noble Foods has been running its own nationally recognised scheme for the past seven years, which includes a short on-road assessment to give drivers a flavour of the job and help the interviewer to understand more about their specific requirements.

ABOVE Operator runs its own nationally recognised driver training scheme

Looking after our fleet's physical and mental wellbeing is paramount, so all drivers go through a yearly medical assessment to ensure they are fit to work. Our first-class training scheme and supportive culture has even seen drivers come back to us after joining other companies, since they feel we care for their needs better. Making safety and training a priority is key for new and existing drivers, so they know they are always supported while on the road.

Another part of this is maintaining high standards of comfort and hygiene inside vehicles, especially in the wake of the pandemic. Every driver at Noble Foods gets a modern, reliable HGV from the start of their career, which is cleaned and serviced regularly. Haulage can be an intensive job with many hours spent on the road, so making drivers feel comfortable and protected is a small duty for businesses that makes a huge difference to the workforce.

Despite the current shortage, operators cannot cut corners with training or the welfare of their drivers; failing to protect them will result in even more talent disappearing from this struggling industry.

As we look to the future, it is clear the UK's supply chain may remain disrupted for some time. Meeting consumer demand and tackling the employment gap will be top priorities for businesses looking to navigate the aftermath of Brexit and the pandemic. Addressing the HGV driver shortage is one of the first steps towards alleviating the strain on the logistics industry, but this must be done with the wellbeing of new and existing drivers in mind.

By encouraging schedule flexibility, appealing to a more diverse demographic, and providing excellent training, companies will attract new talent and reap the rewards of a motivated, supported fleet of drivers for years to come.

Maintaining egg-celent standards of driver welfare is crucial to retaining staff

NEW GEAR

Gadgets and widgets to make life a bit easier

By Andy Stewart
PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

SUITCASE-STYLE PORTABLE INVERTER GENERATORS

Manufacturer: Clarke
Web: www.machinemart.co.uk
Price: From £238.80 (inc VAT)

Machine Mart has recently added three new compact models to its range of inverter generators. Starting at £238.80, these new models all meet Euro 5 emissions regulations and are powerful, lightweight and quiet running, with anti-vibration feet to further reduce noise. The smaller IG950D offers a continuous output of 800W maximum with a 2-litre fuel tank, while the middle-sized IG1200C pushes out 1100W max with 2-litre tank. The largest of the three, the IG2000D, achieves 1800W maximum continuous output with a fuel tank capacity of 4.5 litres.

WIDE-MOUTH WATER BOTTLE

Manufacturer: Super Sparrow
Web: www.supersparrow.com
Price: £19.13 (inc VAT)

Metal water bottles are great for keeping your drinks at the desired temperature for hours on end, but most have a small opening which can be a bit of a faff – especially when sipping a hot brew. But this bottle from Super Sparrow is an excellent alternative – made from durable stainless steel, it features a wide-mouth opening and can keep drinks cold for 24 hours or hot for 12 hours. A special vacuum-sealed insulated cap helps preserve heat and prevent leakage.

FARPOINT 40 TREKKING RUCKSACK

Manufacturer: Osprey
Web: www.ospreyeurope.com
Price: From £72 (inc VAT)

We've tried loads of travel backpacks over the years and no matter how perfect one seems to be at the time of purchase, a niggle or two always crops up after a while. However, this bag from Osprey is the best we've found so far. Alongside a quick-access top pocket for stowing keys, phone, wallet etc, the main compartment can be opened right up like a suitcase – making it much easier to pack it with clothes for a few days on the road. There's also a laptop pouch, a zip to expand storage space, detachable padded shoulder straps, mesh pockets, and it conforms to EU carry-on luggage size in case you want to take it on a plane.

DEVIL 2850 ELECTRIC FAN HEATER

Manufacturer: Clarke
Web: www.machinemart.co.uk
Price: £47.98 (inc VAT)

Beat the devil out of the chilly weather with this new, powerful electric heater from Clarke. Perfect for warming a cold transport office, workshop or garage, this 2.8 kW unit has a sturdy steel frame and weighs 2.5 kg, so it can be easily shifted about via its carry handle. It offers three settings: heater 1 (1.4 kW), heater 2 (2.8 kW) and a fan-only mode for cooling you down when the weather gets hotter.

YOUCUT VIDEO EDITOR & MAKER

Developer: InShot Inc
Platform: Android
Price: Free (in-app purchases)

For those looking to jump onto the vlogging bandwagon, a quick-and-easy video editor is an essential part of the kit. If you're recording footage on your smartphone, most models have a built-in video tool that can do the basics – but if you need to add some extra bells and whistles, *YouCut* is worth a look. This app offers a simple, but powerful interface to enable users to edit, trim, join and apply effects to footage, and the free version even outputs without a watermark. Of course, some of the more powerful tools are locked behind a paywall, but if you get on with the app it might well be worth ponying up for the full suite.

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COLD WEATHER GEAR ROUND-UP

Keep the frost at bay with our pick of the best kit to keep your warm as the winter chill bites

By Andy Stewart
PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

As the well-known saying goes, there's no such thing as bad weather – just bad clothing. While we can't completely agree with that (if you've been stuck outdoors in gale-force winds and freezing rain for hours on end, you'll know what we mean), there's certainly a lot you can do to mitigate discomfort while winter is in full swing. It just takes a bit of canny research and savvy shopping.

Well, we've done the hard work for you in our latest pick of the best cold-weather gear for the 2022 season. From toasty base layers and insulated work boots to rough-weather jackets and goose down-filled sleeping bags, we've got it all covered…

Windproof Beanie

Manufacturer: Gore
Web: www.sigmasports.com
Price: £22 (inc VAT)
This high-tech beanie hat from Gore will help stave off a chilly noggin. Made from lightweight and breathable material, it's toasty enough to be worn on its own and also slim enough to fit comfortably under a hood. Its sweat-wicking properties keep your bonce free from moisture, and its flatlock seams mean it's not scratchy. One-size-fits-all, this beanie is available in a range of colours including high-vis yellow.

Rig Lizard High Dexterity Work Gloves

Manufacturer: HexArmor
Web: www.workgloves.co.uk
Price: £44.99 (inc VAT)
Although not perhaps the warmest gloves around, the latest version of HexArmor's respected Rig Lizard range of workgloves have a lot to offer in wintry conditions. For a start, they provide maximum grip in the wet and are reinforced with a back-of-hand exoskeleton for added protection against impacts. Add to this high levels of abrasion, cut, tear and puncture resistance, plus a high-vis colour scheme, and you've got a winning pair of gloves on your hands.

Gotham Jacket

Manufacturer: The North Face
Web: www.thenorthface.co.uk
Price: £350 (inc VAT)
Rule number one for tackling a cold winter's day: wear the correct coat. This new Gotham jacket from The North Face ticks all the boxes with its waterproof yet breathable fabric, down fill for unbeatable insulation, fur-lined hood, abundance of pockets and a durable water-repellent finish to double-up on moisture protection. Available in black, urban navy, burnt olive green or burnt ochre (pictured), it's a durable choice to wear in the worst of the weather.

Mountain Sock

Manufacturer: Darn Tough
Web: www.trekitt.co.uk
Price: From £27 (inc VAT)

High-tech socks can really help keep the cold at bay when it's icy outside, and these mountain socks from Darn Tough are some of the best we've tried. As the name suggests, they are designed for trekking in the harshest of conditions – but they are just as good for shoving inside a workboot. Made from 73 per cent Merino wool, 25 per cent nylon and two per cent Lycra, they're super warm and offer extra cushioning for maximum comfort. Available in Micro Crew (boot) or Over The Calf heights if that's your preference, these might just be our favourite new footwear items.

Baranof UK Cold Protection Safety Boots

Manufacturer: Cofra
Web: https://safetybootsuk.co.uk
Price: £66.25 (ex VAT)

Work boots are essential PPE, but not all of them are much good in the cold weather. However, these boots from Cofra are designed for just that, as they feature Thinsulate B200 internal lining for robust protection against the cold. With a water-repellent nubuck upper with breathable leather external lining, the Baranof also has abrasion-resistant TEXELLE internal fabric and a non-metallic toe cap and APT plate.

Eolus -15 Degree C Sleeping Bag

Manufacturer: Hyke & Byke
Web: www.amazon.co.uk
Price: From £174.97 (inc VAT)

When the big freeze is in full swing, it'll be hard to beat the cosy warmth of a genuine down-filled sleeping bag. The mummy-style Eolus range from Hyke & Byke is good for temperatures down to -15 degrees C, thanks to its hydrophobic goose down insulation and water-resistant DWR fabrics. The base uses a special ClusterLoft fill, which performs better than goose down under compression. Lightweight (1.52 kg) and compact, it won't take up much space in the cab, but will definitely keep you warm at night.

Yushu LS Base Layer

Manufacturer: Kora Outdoor
Web: www.koraoutdoor.com
Price: £97 (inc VAT)

Those looking for the very finest cold weather base layer to stick on under their workwear should check out this item from Kora Outdoor. Made from a toasty combination of yak wool and Merino wool, this long-sleeve crew-neck has double-stitched seams for extra comfort and is also highly breathable. It's certainly pricey, but might just be worth it for those who really feel the cold.

HITTING PAYDIRT

We take Iveco's new X-WAY tipper for a trialling quarry trek to see if its off-road chops are worthy of the marque's formidable rough-terrain pedigree

By Andy Stewart
PHOTOGRAPHY IVECO / ANDY STEWART

Iveco has one of the widest off-road vehicle portfolios on the market, ranging from light to extra-heavy. At the lighter end is the impressive Daily 4x4, which offers up to five tonnes of maximum permissible load at seven tonnes' GVW. Moving up, Eurocargo 4x4 caters for medium-weight operations with GVW variants from 11-, 12- and 15-tonnes.

Iveco's heavy range consists of the tough X-WAY and super-tough new T-WAY. The latter is a pure off-roader built for quarry work, mining etc and will most likely not see much interest from UK operators. But the X-WAY, primarily targeted at a mix of on- and off-road work, should catch the eye of hauliers running tippers, concrete mixers, timber trucks, hook-lifts, skip-loaders etc. A wide range of wheelbases are offered, and power take-offs (PTOs) can be linked to engine, gearbox or flywheel as the job requires. ➤

Can the latest X-WAY live up to Iveco's off-road reputation?

8x4 rigid gave a slightly stiff ride, but handling performance was spot-on

Test Specification

- **Model:** Iveco X-WAY AD360X48Z HR OFF 8x4 rigid
- **GVM:** 36,000 kg
- **Wheelbase:** 4250 mm
- **Rear axle:** Hub reduction, 4.23 ratio
- **Tyres:** Bridgestone 13R22.5 mixed use
- **Suspension:** Parabolic two-leaf (front) & three-leaf (rear)
- **Engine:** 11.1-litre Cursor 11, six-cylinder in-line diesel, Euro 6E
- **Max power:** 480 bhp @ 1465-1900 rpm
- **Max torque:** 2300 Nm @ 970-1465 rpm
- **Gearbox:** HI-TRONIX 12TX 2410 TO (ZF Traxon)
- **Additional equipment:** AD day cab, OFF vehicle set-up, steel bumper, 290-litre aluminium fuel tank, 50-litre AdBlue tank, hydraulic retarder, vertical exhaust pipe

On & off the grid

X-WAY has a modular design which enables a wide amount of chassis customisation. Two-, three- and four-axle variants can be spec'd (4x2, 6x2, 8x2, 6x4 or 8x4), with rear axles available as single- or hub-reduction. Suspension can be air or mechanical, and disk brakes are offered both front and rear.

Iveco also has a HI-TRACTION hydrostatic front-wheel drive system available, which can seamlessly switch to all-wheel drive when a bit more grip is required to tackle tricky terrain. HI-TRACTION is lighter than a standard all-wheel drive set-up, making it a good choice for operators looking to squeeze in some more payload while not sacrificing off-road capability. A Creep mode can also force the truck to run on hydrostatic power alone, should some precision low-speed manoeuvring be required.

Payload is one of X-WAY's major strengths, with Super Loader versions offering one of the best on the market. Trucks can be configured to fall inside one of three main brackets: On, On+ or Off, which all share a frame thickness of 7.7 mm. 'On' is geared towards on-road driving and prioritises ride comfort, while still benefiting from a reinforced chassis. 'On+' balances on- and off-road performance with a higher approach angle and ground clearance, plus improved bumper protection. Both On and On+ are available in 4x2, 6x2,

AD day cab offers superb visibility all around the vehicle

Three steps into cab. Rubber bottom step resists impact damage

8x2, 6x4 and 8x4 set-ups. Meanwhile, the 'Off' spec is for primarily off-road tasks requiring greater gradeability and approach angles, better chassis reinforcement and lower R&M costs than purely on-road vehicles. For X-WAY, this is offered at 4x2, 6x4 or 8x4.

Cab options for X-WAY are AS Sleeper, AT Sleeper with low or medium roof, and AD short cab with low roof. GVW for these trucks with AD/AT cabs ranges from 26-30 tonnes for 6x4, or 32-36 tonnes for 8x4.

Iveco's new Euro 6 Step E engines have an increased combustion ratio, use HI-SCR aftertreatment and can be 8.7-litre Cursor 9 at 330, 360 or 400 bhp; 11.1-litre Cursor 11 at 420, 460 or 480 bhp; or 12.9-litre Cursor 13 at 510 or 570 bhp. Torque ranges from 1400 Nm for the 330 bhp lump to 2500 Nm for the top-power 570 bhp unit

Alternatively, you can spec a 12.9-litre Cursor 13 NP (Natural Power) gas engine to cut carbon emissions. This is rated at 460 bhp and delivers 2000 Nm of torque.

Automated ZF HI-TRONIX 12- or 16-speed transmissions are the default offering, which can be taken with dedicated Off-Road programming and a rock-free mode to get you out of trouble. Iveco is one of the few remaining manufacturers to offer a manual option – so drivers who enjoy a 'traditional' level of gear control can make use of a ZF Ecosplit 16-speed 'box if they prefer.

> "This X-WAY is spec'd for hard graft, so we're not expecting top-end levels of comfort."

Into the dirt

When we tested X-WAY on UK highways back in the September issue, we were impressed with the truck's on-road performance – but we were keen to take it off-road and drive it in anger around some difficult terrain. So late last year, Iveco flew us to Bologna, Italy to try out its off-road vehicles on a variety of lengthy roads in a large quarry.

Our ride was an X-WAY AD360X48Z 8x4 rigid tipper. This was sporting an AD day cab, which is a step up over previous generation Ivecos, though it's still a bit 'workmanlike' compared to some other competing brands (for example, MAN's new tipper cabins manage to offer a more luxurious feel alongside a similarly hardwearing and functional design). However, this X-WAY is spec'd for hard graft, so we're not expecting top-end levels of comfort in a lorry that's going to be bouncing around in the dust day in, day out. Visibility, however, is excellent. ➤

ABOVE Tough quarry course gave a fine demonstration of X-WAY's off-road capabilities

We have lift-off! It's always fun to catch some air on test drives

Fine control

After firing up the Cursor 11 six-cylinder engine, we punched the HI-TRONIX 12-speed automated 'box into Drive, pulled out of the parking area and headed straight for a trail that twisted around and through the quarry. Soon enough, we were faced with a steep climb over very loose gravel, which needed the diff lock to be engaged and a switch into semi-auto mode to hold onto gears until we flicked the stalk for a change up or down.

Loaded to 32 tonnes, we selected third gear and this X-WAY dug in impressively as we climbed the hill, tyres following the deep, muddy grooves forged by other vehicles before us. At the crest, we flicked to fourth and swung an immediate tight right-turn into a wooded area, which began a long, steep descent. The powerful retarder held us back, and we always felt in full control of the vehicle – despite the slippery surface.

We continued on for good few miles, slowly and methodically working our way along the trail that rose and fell, twisted and turned and presented no short amount of sharp crests that lifted our front axle high into the air.

It was a bumpy ride – our rigid had parabolic two-leaf suspension on the front axle and three-leaf on the rear so it felt fairly stiff, but handling was excellent. In fact, there wasn't a single point along the entire course where we felt X-WAY was beginning to struggle.

Winding, hilly route put engine and retarder through their paces

Verdict

Iveco has a strong pedigree when it comes to off-road vehicles and its latest range looks set to carry on the tradition. X-WAY is tough and comparatively lightweight, offering great payload potential if spec'd correctly. The AD day cab is not perhaps the most elegant or luxuriously appointed model on the market, but it's got all the essentials covered: visibility is great, controls are easy to find, and it seems comfortable enough for a full day's work off the beaten track.

X-WAY feels like an extremely capable truck. Handling is superb and the 480 bhp, 2300 Nm motor was more than enough to get us around a tough course with a decent load on. And its stopping power is also worth reiterating – Iveco's retarders are some of the best we've used, and when geared correctly it holds on tight on even the steepest hills.

Tipper drivers are some of the last to favour manuals over automated transmissions, and it's easy to see why this level of control is useful in quarries and the like. But the ease with which the driver can flick through the gears using HI-TRONIX's semi-auto mode further weakens the argument for stirring a stick. As mentioned, Iveco is one of the last few truck-makers offering manual 'boxes, so the option is there if you really want it – but for most applications, we reckon the latest automated 'box is well up to the task.

We like

- ✚ Great handling
- ✚ Strong & lightweight build
- ✚ Excellent engine & braking performance

We don't like

- ▬ Stiff ride
- ▬ Cab not as plush as competitors

Although the automated transmission was loaded with Off-Road software, we stuck to semi-auto for the rest of the journey and soon became adept and grabbing the gear we needed before we got into trouble. But if we had gotten stuck, this truck's rock-free mode would help get us moving again. Plus, we found the low-speed Creeper mode was useful when we got back to the parking area and began jostling for a space.

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KERB APPEAL

What does it take to operate one of the highest spec fleets in the UK? Bodge Aylestone Ward, MD of Aylestone Transport, has the answers…

By Harrison Thomas

PHOTOGRAPHY TOM CUNNINGHAM, CRAIG ECCLESTON & AYLESTONE TRANSPORT

Aylestone Transport's latest flagship is this striking FH540 Globetrotter

VOLVO
AYLESTONE

So far as nicknames go, it's fair to say Bodge Aylestone Ward has fully embraced his. In fact, call him Richard and he'll quickly correct you!

"My grandad gave all the grandkids silly names, and I guess 'Bodge' has just stuck," he tells us. "I'm often taken back with how many people in the industry have heard of me. And I've got my name to thank for that – it's not easily forgotten. If your name's Dave, no one remembers a Dave."

Today, Bodge heads a company with a deep-rooted family history, having been founded by his grandfather, William Ward, with a horse and cart in 1918. Originally trading as Ward Brothers, the firm was based in Coal Pit Lane in Aylestone – only changing its name five decades later when it became a limited company.

By the time Bodge was born in July 1961, the family's truck fleet was expanding. He grew up gazing out of the window at the constant buzz of a busy transport yard, employing several members of the family. "We lived in the farmhouse on site, so I could always see what was going on. But my Dad didn't want any of us to get involved in lorries because he said there was no money in it."

Yet Bodge wasn't put off, and while his brother and sister headed off to university, he chose to take an apprenticeship at Foden in 1977 – just two weeks after finishing school. After four years at Foden, he came back and joined the family business, initially planning to use his newly found engineering expertise to help maintain the fleet. "That was the idea, but it didn't work out quite like that. My Dad wouldn't let me do anything because he knew best, didn't he?"

Undeterred, Bodge remained with the family business – busying himself as a driver during the day, while working as a rock DJ doing gigs for Mecca Leisure by night.

Latest fleet flagship benefits from no less than six different options packages

> "Kelsa effectively fitted as much of its product to the truck as space permitted. The result is impressive, to say the least."

Music industry calling!

"One morning, I got home at about 3 am from a gig and I had to be in the lorry at 4 am. I soon realised the two jobs weren't a good match and one of them had to give – and it wasn't going to be the lorries!

"I was even offered the chance to go on a two-year world tour with Bon Jovi – and I turned it down! Next was a six-month tour with The Smiths. But nope, I turned that down for the lorries too!"

Bodge's passion for the industry is all too clear and his experience in transport continued to build until, following the death of his father, an opportunity arose to buy the yard and the business, which at the time had been part-owned by his father, aunt and uncle.

Nearly 20 years on from taking ownership, you will rarely find Bodge sitting behind a desk. Most days he's out driving – and that's quite clearly where he prefers to be. "I love being behind the wheel. Being on the road, getting to see customers, and delivering to them on time and with a smile, that's worth its weight in gold," he admits.

Aylestone Transport has run several makes of truck over the years, including ERFs, Fodens and even some Spanish Dodges. But when Bodge took the helm, it didn't take too long for a

LEFT TO RIGHT 2018 marked firm's 100th year in business

ABOVE Always spec'd with safety in mind

ABOVE Highest standards are maintained

ABOVE Drivers take pride in their vehicles

couple of well-known Swedish marques to make an appearance.

"I initially wanted to buy a British lorry, but in 2006 I'd got a price for a Foden and a price for a Volvo, and we went for the Volvo. Our first one wasn't without its faults, so after that we had a Scania because one of the drivers desperately wanted one. Unfortunately, it proved to be an absolute bag of nails and we've never gone back."

New way forward

Until that point Bodge had been buying second-hand trucks, but a friend offered some valuable advice, suggesting if he bought new, he'd get drivers easier. And Bodge hasn't looked back since, typically buying a new

The new truck is being maintained at the local dealer's Bardon depot

Volvo every year to keep the fleet fresh. Given the chronic driver shortages, he also has another secret weapon which ensures he runs a smooth ship at Aylestone Transport: his wife of nearly 20 years, Annette. We're midway through our interview when one of the firm's drivers arrives back at the end of a shift; before we can say anything, Annette's out of her chair and off to fill the truck with diesel and AdBlue.

Bodge explains: "She does that every day; plus, she'll do walkaround inspections and ask questions if something doesn't look right. Annette is absolutely brilliant – and does all this on top of handling the accounts and a lot of the administration."

Once back from their shift, the drivers also enjoy a fresh brew and a slice of cake – and it soon becomes obvious the baking is down to Annette too. "All the world stops for tea and cake," she points out. "These small things are important; they're part of the routine here." ➤

Bodge firmly believes you never struggle to get good drivers if you give them great trucks

Flagship spec

The latest truck to join the fleet last August was arguably Bodge's most special yet: an FH540 Globetrotter. Speaking with local dealer Volvo Truck and Bus Centre South & East, we learn it's one of the highest-spec FHs they've ever supplied. Bodge opted to take the 6x2 pusher axle tractor unit on full air-suspension, and with no less than six different options packages and multiple accessories too.

On top of Volvo's own LED light package, the truck was even sent to Kelsa for the full "Kelsafication" process, as Bodge calls it. This saw Lazer lights added, with in-built flashing amber beacons and sidelights. Kelsa even developed an all-new Multibar XS for the truck, plus added a perimeter kit for maximum visual impact – effectively fitting as much of its product to the truck as space permitted. The result is impressive, to say the least.

And while the colossal specification is pretty much unrivalled by other fleets, it's even more notable when you consider only one Aylestone driver spends the occasional night out (and that's by choice). For the rest of the team, they're back in their own beds every night – which means the most taxing job the in-cab microwave handles is warming the porridge after an early start!

Safety first

There's no expense spared when it comes to safety at Aylestone Transport, and all trucks come loaded with active safety systems. Bodge explains: "We had features like collision warning with advanced emergency braking very early, because I had one driver go into the back of another vehicle. I figured if you have auto-braking, it's like an insurance policy you don't see. A bump on the road can cost thousands in downtime, so we find any safety features that can protect our drivers, our vehicles and other road users are worth their weight in gold."

In return for driving flagship trucks, Bodge expects nothing but the highest standards of professionalism and efficiency from his team. And it all begins with the handover drivers get

> "I love being behind the wheel. Being on the road, getting to see customers, and delivering to them on time and with a smile – that's worth its weight in gold." *Bodge Aylestone Ward*

You will rarely find Bodge sitting behind a desk – he much prefers to be behind the wheel

One-of-a-kind Volvo

Tractor units aside, there's another famous Volvo owned by Bodge – and it's his custom-made Volvo Trucks spoon. Presented as a joke by a technician at his local dealership, Bodge has taken to carrying the spoon with him everywhere – and snapping photos of it on its travels around the world. In just a few years, it's become one of the world's best-travelled utensils. "I figured, who wants to see pictures of me on days away? So you can forget selfies; it's all about the spoon!" he jokes. And if you don't believe us, just look Bodge up on *Facebook*...!

when a new truck arrives. "Andy Wright is the Fuelwatch manager at our local dealer and his handovers are exceptional. Drivers like to think they know what all the buttons do, but when Andy comes in and explains it, they quickly realise they have a lot to learn. We see the results of his training every day when we look at our fuel economy via the *Volvo Connect* app.

"All the drivers are in competition with each other, trying to average the top score of 100 for a whole week. It's a great incentive to drive as efficiently as possible."

As for trailers, Bodge switched allegiance in 2017 and is very happy with the fleet he's running today. "We used to buy from Dennison, but when we went back to place a repeat order, the price had shot up about five grand. So I spoke to SDC and it made one for me instead; and nowadays we only buy SDC – with HMF cranes."

Aylestone Transport is exclusively Volvo these days

Early doors

Over the years Aylestone Transport has specialised in brick & block work, and moving slabs and kerbs. These days the majority of its work is the slabs and kerbs for Aggregate Industries, with one truck focused on running to Northampton and others delivering to London and across the South East.

Given the choice, Bodge would like to be out driving five days per week and jokes that it's certainly better than working for a living. Plus, he'll pick and choose the work to suit his business, preferring early morning deliveries where possible. "We agree delivery times with the customer in advance and do our best to get on site in the early hours. It's normally best for us, and it's best for them. We beat the traffic and they arrive at work to find all the materials they need, precisely where they need them."

The silly-AM starts certainly don't faze the drivers at Aylestone Transport; and Bodge says he's never had a problem recruiting since investing in a premium new-build fleet.

"I'm lucky and I don't have to advertise for staff. People just hear we've got a new lorry, or we need a new driver, and someone turns up," he says matter-of-factly. "We look after our people, give them great trucks, and in return it all just works."

Music to the ears of Volvo and Kelsa, no doubt, as any budget which would be spent on recruitment advertising can be ploughed into the next truck for the fleet. A sound investment, if ever we heard one!

Every truck operated by the firm in recent years has been finished to a high spec

Driver Callum is delighted with the Renault

Bright idea: Red and white rims shine up nicely and add more colour

CALLUM SMITH'S RENAULT T520

MAN AT THE WHEEL:

Name: Callum Smith
Age: 36
Nickname: None
Hobbies: Cars (member of the Subaru Owners Club)
Experience: Driving 14 years; started on eight-wheelers then a bit of everything including bulkers, tippers, flats and fridges
Favourite truck: Volvo FH16 or Scania 144
Oscars: Thanks to PJM for the opportunity to drive this truck

TRUCK:

Make & Model: Renault T520
Owner: PJM Services
Based: Ladybank
Custom Stuff: Deep colour-coded sun visor, Kelsa Hibar with LED name board and LED beacons, Volvo dirt deflectors on front grille, colour-coded white grille, colour-coded mirrors, colour-coded wheels, custom high-reflective graphics, custom logo on back of cab
Best thing about it: Comfort and interior space
Gongs: None yet, only had one show

Fancy fleet: This is PJM's first Renault and really suits its livery to a T

Step ahead: Callum's sticker tells how much he likes the Renault cabin

Badge swap: Familiar emblem is given a Renault twist

Top class: The cab is crowned with a custom lightboard, deep visor and Kelsa Hibar

By Steve McCann
PHOTOGRAPHY SMc PHOTOGRAPHY

LOGGER H

Tag axles are often preferred for timber trucks for better traction and manoeuvrability

HEADS

Two 44-tonners go head-to-head in our latest Truck on Trial, but these are not your average general haulage trucks – these 6x2 tag-axle units are specified solely for timber haulage in the Scottish Highlands

By Pip Dunn

PHOTOGRAPHY PIP DUNN

This issue's Truck on Trial has a slight difference. Yes, we are pitching two 44-tonne tractor units against each other; but these are not the typical trucks you'd see hauling a fridge or a curtainsider. These Scania and MAN units have been bought and specified for a bespoke role: timber haulage in the hilly Scottish Highlands.

Both trucks are from the TRATON Group, and both are 6x2s with a rear lifting tag axle and they are spec'd solely for gruelling work that sees them heading up single-track forest 'roads' to collect their heavy loads. Their engines are constantly under high demand; not just to move the vehicles once loaded, but also to power cranes used to load the lengths of wood.

Rear tag axles behind the drive axle are favoured for this demanding work. They enable the driver to raise the axle to aid traction by putting more weight on the drive axle. This can help the driver get out of sticky situations on soft ground, which can happen all too often in the forests and woods these vehicles have to traverse to collect felled timber.

Having a shorter wheelbase also improves manoeuvrability. This is another useful feature for a timber truck, as turning space is often restricted and multiple shunts are frequently required when turning round on tight forest tracks.

This MAN is the pre-New Generation model

That said, both these trucks could be used for general haulage if required. Indeed, some timber hauliers often sub-contract out on fridge and other work when necessary. They just have to make sure the fifth wheel is correctly positioned when coupling to trailers so as not to foul the landing legs.

Trucking visited W Taylor & Sons of Findochty in the glorious Morayshire countryside in Scotland. Based in a small yard near the village overlooking the sea, it's probably one of the most wonderful backdrops we've ever had for a Truck on Trial shoot! And with a very welcoming owner and both drivers,

Spec: MAN TGX

- **Model:** MAN TGX 26.510 tag axle
- **Design GVW/:** 44,000 kg
- **Chassis:** 2600 mm wheelbase
- **Front axle:** 8000 kg capacity
- **Rear axle:** 11,500 kg (drive), 7100 kg (tag)
- **Gearbox:** TipMatic 12.28 automated transmission
- **Engine:** D26, 12.4-litre, straight-six, Euro 6d
- **Max power:** 510 bhp @ 1800 rpm
- **Max torque:** 2600 Nm @ 930-1350 rpm
- **Cab:** XLX twin-bunk sleeper

ABOVE: TGX has super singles on the front for better grip **RIGHT:** Mirrors cause "terrible" blind spots, says driver

ABOVE: Cab access is via three steps

nothing was too much trouble when we were positioning the vehicles for taking pictures.

Into the woods

In this test, we're putting a 70-plate Scania New Generation R650 up against a slightly older 18-plate MAN TGX 26.510. The MAN has an automated gearbox, while the Scania is 'old school' with a 12-speed manual transmission. In a market where 'autos rule' now seems to be the mantra, the Swedish marque is one of the few manufacturers still offering a manual option. DAF (for ➤

ABOVE: Driver says wheel is too big!

ABOVE: Storage is adequate in XLX cab

Driver's Verdict: Jim Stephen, MAN

Jim is 64 and has been a driver for over 30 years. He's from nearby MacDuff and was a fisherman, then a joiner before moving into road haulage. He joined Taylor's in 2009, having previously worked for WJ Gauld and Sons.

He says: "I like the MAN. It's very comfortable to drive, so I can't fault it in that respect. I'm out all week, so it's got plenty of room in the cab. The cab is OK, but the steering wheel is a nightmare because it's too big! I hear it's better on the new-model MANs.

"The bin is useless, but the fridge is fine – as is the storage. I also have a microwave in my truck.

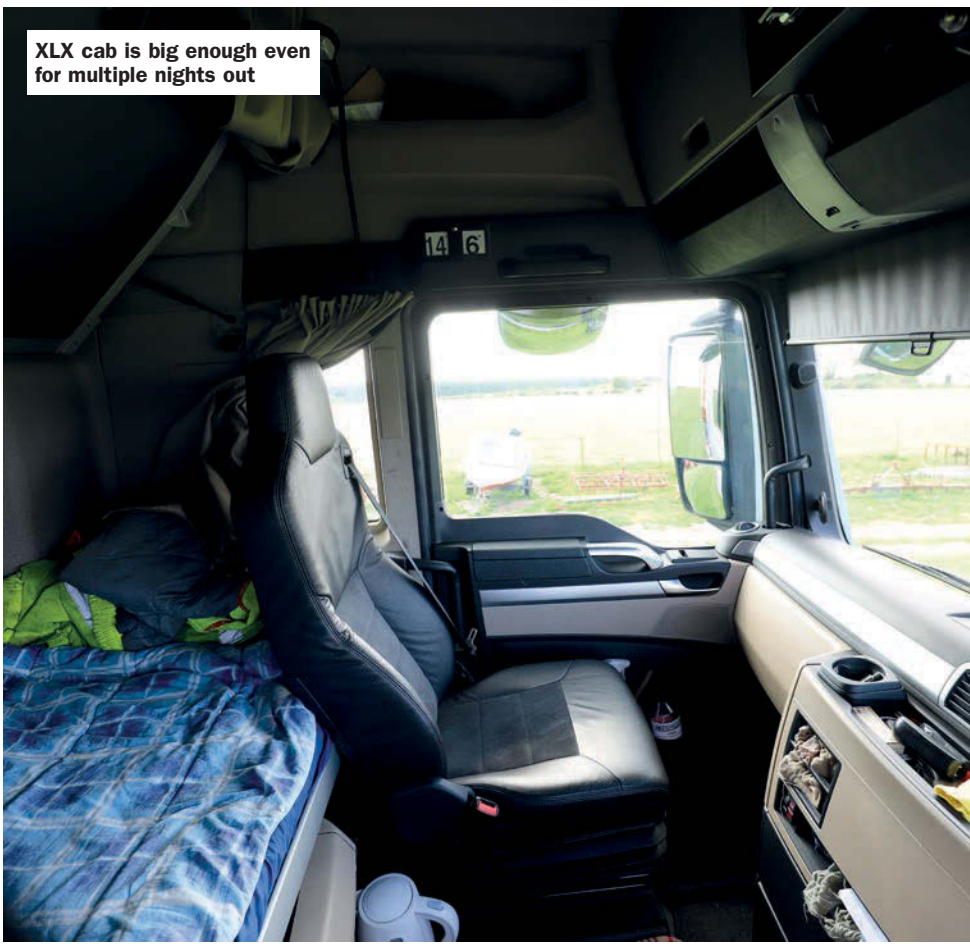
"It pulls very well for a 510, but I would prefer a bit more power. The driving position is good; there's nothing I don't like about that. I've adapted it to suit me.

"The bed is fine; it's very comfortable. You always get a good bed in an MAN. It's got plenty of length, and the curtains are very effective at blocking out the light."

Is there anything he doesn't like about the truck? "Apart from the steering wheel and the terrible blind spots on the mirrors, which are also hard to keep clean, it's fine. The build quality is good. If I could change anything, I'd like a smaller steering wheel and a tag-axle with the bigger engine.

"I had a DAF before which was comfortable to drive, but the MAN definitely has better grip when it's in the woods."

"The MAN has an automated gearbox, while the Scania is 'old school' with a 12-speed manual transmission."



XLX cab is big enough even for multiple nights out

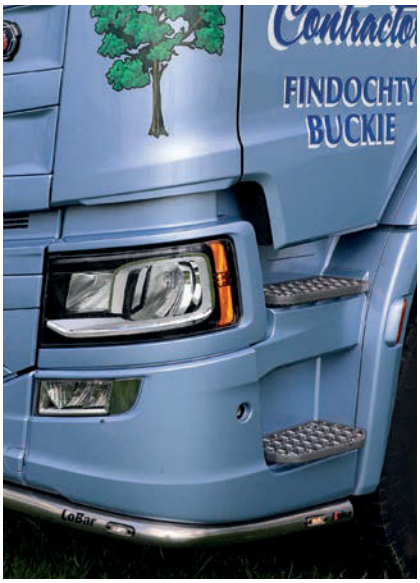
the time being, with its outgoing XF models) and Iveco are the only others to offer the traditional clutch and gear lever these days.

W Taylor & Sons has been in business for 39 years. It was started by William Taylor Snr and William Taylor Jnr, now in charge of the company, who started with his father's firm when he was 21. "My father bought a truck from the family firm of Taylor's Transport in Buckie when it ceased trading," says William. "I then passed my test and joined the firm and we bought another truck and did general haulage."

Spec: Scania R650

- **Model:** Scania R650 6x2 tag axle
- **Design:** GCW/GVW: 45,000 kg / 24,000 kg
- **Chassis:** 2600 mm
- **Front axle:** 8000 kg capacity
- **Rear axles:** 11,500 kg (rear, drive) 7500 kg (tag)
- **Gearbox:** GRSO925R manual transmission
- **Engine:** Scania DC-16 141, 16.4-litre, V8, turbocharged, intercooled, direct injection, SCR, Euro 6
- **Max Power:** 650 bhp @ 1900 rpm
- **Max Torque:** 3300 Nm @ 950-1350 rpm
- **Cab:** R Highline twin-sleeper

ABOVE: Mirrors are often clipped by trees



ABOVE: R650 is returning about 6 mpg

The company now operates six trucks out of its small site at Findochty, near Buckie. The fleet breakdown is the Scania R650, an old-generation R580, the MAN, two Mercedes-Benz Actros 2551s and a Renault Range T High – the latter of which is driven by Catherine,

This R650 is not a heavy-duty XT model

William's daughter. All are 6x2 tags and, apart from the Scanias, all have automated gearboxes.

"We are happy at a fleet of six," says William. "Three of the trucks are used on timber, and the other three on bulk haulage." Over the years, the company has also operated Fodens, ERFs and Volvos.

Like so many modern operators, the firm sticks to a one driver, one truck policy for the added benefits of looking after the assets. The Mercedes used to be on timber, but

ABOVE: Dash has been overtaken by rivals

Scania has leather seats and a nice driver set-up

ABOVE: Scania still offers a manual 'box

William says the back-up for the marque was poor and its trucks are now out of the picture moving forward. One will be replaced by a new MAN very soon.

MAN has good back-up in Elgin, some 20 miles away. "The Scania dealer in Inverness is very good. Our timber trucks pass there pretty much every night, so it's easy to pop in for anything we need."

Pumped & ready

The two trucks we are interested in are used solely on timber haulage and have the necessary tyre inflation system fitted, which enables tyres to be deflated and inflated by the driver in the cab to suit different terrains. This is a mandatory requirement by all forest owners in the area, so you really can't use 'any old truck' on this work.

Using 6x2s rather than 6x4s saves weight and is better on fuel, although William says some forest managers "are pushing for operators to move to 6x4s".

He points out the MAN is delivering about 6-6.5 mpg, whereas the Scania is just about reaching 6 mpg – a slight improvement on the R580, which usually reaches about 5.5 mpg.

It must be stressed, however, that 6 mpg is a pretty good figure for a truck involved in this kind of work. The topography in the Highlands is ➤

Driver's Verdict: Duncan Horne, Scania

The Scania is piloted by 38-year-old Duncan Horne from Musstodloch. He's been a driver for 14 years and with Taylors for nearly eight. "I was an electrician before I became a truck driver," he says. Duncan has worked for a few local firms, such as Ian Roger, AF Grant and McPherson.

"I prefer a manual gearbox because it's easier to control on timber work. This truck is comfortable to drive; much better than the older Scania.

"It pulls well and goes really well with 650 bhp. I do love a V8! The cab is fine with plenty of lockers, and it's got a microwave, fridge and coffee-maker. The driving position is very good indeed; I have all I need close to hand."

While Duncan is very complimentary of the Scania on the whole – and he says one of the reasons he drives trucks is to pilot a V8 – he points out the bed is "not the greatest". "It's a bit hard and not overly comfortable," he tells us.

But this is his only black mark against the big Swede. "The interior is a bit more plasticy and I don't rate the bed, but other than that it's a lovely truck."

The Scania was new in November 2020 and replaced an R580. Before that, Duncan's vehicle was a 6x4 Renault Premium.

Dealer back-up is a key driver for firm’s purchasing decisions

incredibly hilly, and the terrain in the woods means the trucks are often crawling along at full power. All of which means fuel returns are never going to be anywhere near the 10, 11 and 12 mpg figures achieved by general hauliers in England.

Timber haulage is also heavy work, even when unladen. The tractor unit, plus trailer with its crane, means the Scania generally tips the scales at 20.2 tonnes unladen, while the MAN is half a tonne better at 19.7 tonnes. The trucks have on-board weighing mechanisms to ensure they don’t leave the forests at anything over 44 tonnes.

The good thing with timber is you can max-out bang-on 44 tonnes pretty much all the time. If you creep over, you can take a log or two off, and likewise you can add one or two extras to reach maximum weight. It means the two trucks are running almost half of their lives at top

Operator’s Verdict: William Taylor

The trucks featured in this Trial are bought on finance. When their working life with Taylors is over, they will either be traded in or sold privately to local hauliers. “We always buy new; I’ve not had a second-hand truck for a long time,” says William.

He likes the Scanias. “The V8 580 has never missed a beat. They are the best in terms of reliability.”

The MAN, however, has had some issues: “MAN EGR valves are poor and remain a problem; we have had three replaced already. Electrics are also problematic with the MAN.

“There was an issue with the wheel studs on the Scania, but that was covered by the warranty. Both trucks, however, have very good build quality and we have not had much bother with either in that respect. Despite the hard work, we have no issues with the suspension on either, which is good when you consider they both spend plenty of time off-road!”

But William does like the MAN; partly because they are much cheaper than a Scania, but also because of the dealer and the sales team. “Our salesman went to Mercedes for a while, which is why we bought a couple of Actros. We can call him 24/7. The salesman returned to MAN and ended up sorting out an issue on a Mercedes for us on the R&M! But the Scania dealer is great too; there’s no bother with Scania.”

Price is a major issue. The Scanias are presently being quoted at 50 per cent more than the MAN, and that’s before the £10,000 needed to fit the tyre inflation equipment. All in, a new Scania and trailer sets William back £250,000 – which factors in additions such as a crane, bolsters, specialist tyres and the like. The trailers are from Montracon.

This high capital investment means the kit needs to be good and stand up to a pretty rigorous life. “We aim to keep the tractor units for at least six to seven years. We trade them in when a new truck is due.” It means the company is typically buying one new truck each year.

Left to right: Owner William and drivers Jim (MAN) and Duncan (Scania)

weight – and they cover some distances as well.

Says William: "We load all across Scotland from Fort William and the Isle of Skye in the west, Wick in the north and as far south as Lockerbie. The drivers are usually away all week, so they need decent cabs."

However, he steers clear of the biggest cabs due to the chances of being hit by low-hanging trees, plus of course the payload benefits. This means neither truck has the biggest cab available in the product range – the Scania is an R Highline as opposed to an S-cab with flat floor, while the MAN has XLX cab instead of the biggest XXL version.

Tester's Verdict: Pip Dunn

If we were to take the two trucks purely on their merits as hardware, then the Scania wins – but only just. The fact there is a manual gearbox option is a winner with many timber hauliers, and this is a diminishing market. That said, plenty of operators in the Highlands now use automated gearboxes, as proven by the number of Volvos employed on such work.

And indeed, some drivers – especially those who are younger – prefer an auto, especially as they can switch it into manual mode in sticky situations. It allows them to keep both hands on the wheel for longer periods, which is another plus point. But if your driver demands a manual, then Scania is the best offering on the market in that respect.

The Scania is well-appointed and very driver friendly. It also has bags of power – V8s are popular in this neck of the woods for that very reason. Scania now offers its V8 at 530, 590, 660 and 770 bhp, having recently replaced the 520, 580, 650 and 730 bhp models.

A 540 bhp straight-six might be a good option as it saves on price, weight, and possibly delivers marginally better fuel consumption. The new 560R might be even more appealing when it starts to arrive at dealers next year.

The MAN, however, is a more than competent vehicle. It doesn't have the 'wow factor' of the Scania, but MAN knows how to build a decent truck for off-road work. The TGX cab is still one of the best in the business, with ample space.

Where it is let down is the lack of a tag-axle option with the D38 engine – now available at 540, 580 and 640 bhp outputs, all of which would appeal to those in the Highlands.

Having said Scania would win purely on a bolt-for-bolt comparison, the MAN is actually a better bet for the operator in their quest to earn money. It's cheaper to buy – considerably so – and if you are keeping the truck for seven years, then the residuals argument rapidly fades. It's marginally better on fuel – half a mile to the gallon may not seem much, but it's actually about 12 per cent better on this work. And it's lighter – half-a-tonne per trip adds up over the year as well.

Inside the cab, the new MAN models are a match for Scania these days – and they are a stunning truck to drive.

Comparing a 70-plate R650 with an 18-plate MAN TGX 26.510 sees the Scania win as the better truck, but the MAN wins as the better business proposition.

It would be interesting to compare a current R540 (with its straight-six) with a new TGX 26.510; and here, we think the MAN would win in pretty much every respect other than residuals. But having said that, a new 560R (which probably won't be seen on our roads until this time next year) might turn the tables yet again…

In conclusion, this is a very, very close call indeed. Both are premier league trucks and both are very good for this market. If we were the man at MAN, I would be looking to see if there was a way of offering a D38 engine with a tag axle as a tractor unit.

If it's a decision based purely on perceived demand, we reckon a 26.580 or 26.640 might prove appealing to Scottish operators and drivers – and indeed nationwide – when employed on gruelling timber work.

So Scania wins – just. But a re-run with the latest models might well see the result reverse.

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CURRENT LISTINGS

AEC MERCURY

1968, £500. Take me away! Vehicle was running when parked up. Shame to send to scrap yard. Good for parts. Engine, gearbox, axle, springs, etc. hence scrap price. Don't miss this little treat. Please call 07850 694042, South East.
111352

BELSIZE

1921, £11,950. This lovely truck was known to operate as a hawkers truck in the 1970s. All up and running. Please call 07539 074242, South East.
112138

DODGE 50

1976, £7,000. T/Unit. V8 Perkins engine, Eaton two-speed axle, two new tyres. Also Trojan van, 1958 ex BRS Perkins, P3 diesel engine, drive away, £10,000. Please call 07759 473380, Yorkshire and the Humber.
111391

ERF B SERIES

1969, 000 miles, £2,000. ERF 1969. Gardner 180 engine. Lorry complete for restoration or spares. EX SHOWMANS. Please call 07745827981, Ireland.
112188

ERF LV UNIT

£13,500. ERF Lv flat bed Lorry with180 Gardner, David brown gearbox and 2 speed rear axle. Fully restored 4 years ago including new door posts and new cab timber. Reupholstered seat in leather and all dials working. New rear body galvanised and proper timber fitted to bed. MOT'd each year with no trouble, as you can see it's a working lorry so not museum piece. Please call 01297 678588 , South West.
111216

SCAMMELL HANDYMAN

1960, 0000 miles, £0. SUITABLE FOR SPARES/ PARTS. LEYLAND 680 ENGINE. Please call 07745827981, Ireland.
112187

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The new MAN TGX.
The perfect overall package: the new generation of MAN trucks convinces comprehensively with the best MAN workplace for drivers of all times, outstanding efficiency and cost-effectiveness, optimum vehicle availability and strong partnership in customer services. And that makes the people at MAN proud of their achievements. #SimplyMyTruck
MAN

By Steve McCann PHOTOGRAPHY SMc PHOTOGRAPHY

OUT & ABOUT

Coul runnings: Scania R450 in Hayton Coulthard's fantastic livery

Wall Street: Volvo FM with midlift belongs to Drywall specialist, British Gypsum

White out: Unmarked Mercedes-Benz Actros 2545 pulling a Ryder fridge trailer

Glass ceiling: Iveco Eurocargo 180-250 rigid is ideal for Glazerite's deliveries

Bank on it: Oakbank's Scania S500 on a bulk tipper run

Spares and repairs: PACCAR DAF LF rigid takes parts to where they're needed most

It's the law: Harry Lawson Volvo FH460 running with a tanker

Grab and go: DAF CF rigid crane truck with a full load of rubble

A dog's life: Brewdog beer load moved by an ARR Craib Scania R450

Irish charm: Volvo FH500 belongs to Ireland-based operator, BM Transport

On the line: Freightliner's MAN TGX carrying a container

Special brew: Glendinning's curtainside is a nice match for Brewer's Scania R580

On board: ATW Transport Volvo FH with a Norbord trailer

BREAK TIME

Tomes, tunes & films to keep you entertained in the cab

By Andy Stewart

PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

NEW & RECENT MUSIC RELEASES

TOY:BOX

Artist: David Bowie
Label: PLG UK
Price: £27.99 (Amazon)

This new three-CD boxset is a fine collection for Bowie fans. Recorded just after his successful Glastonbury performance in 2000, but unable to be released until now, *TOY* features a set of reimagined classics from his back catalog. Also included is a load of alternative versions, B-sides, unplugged and 'slightly electric' treatments – most of which are worth a listen.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Raise The Roof

Artist: Robert Plant & Alison Krauss
Label: Rhino
Price: £6.99 (Amazon)

As collaborations go, Led Zeppelin front-man Robert Plant and US Bluegrass-country singer Alison Krauss are a tad unusual; but they sure do work well together. This new album from the duo – which comes 14 years after their previous joint effort, *Raising Sand* – is another treat, featuring versions of favourite tunes from a wide range or artists.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Tears Of Hercules

Artist: Rod Stewart
Label: Rhino
Price: £6.99 (Amazon)

Credit where it's due, Sir Rod is still putting out new music – but the trouble is, the tracks on this latest album are lacking that bit of edge. Where once the crooner could salvage a twee song with a cheeky wink and playful strut, now it just seems a bit old-hat. There's some radio-friendly tunes here, to be sure – but to us it's all a bit cringy.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

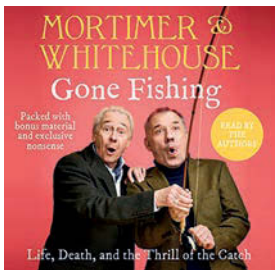
California Soil

Artist: London Grammar
Label: Ministry Of Sound
Price: £5.99 (Amazon)

London Grammar's latest CD is a real cracker. Instead of boldly exploring new musical frontiers like so many bands facing their 'difficult third album', Hannah Reid and co have instead matured and gently evolved to produce a recognisable, but still fresh sounding set of tracks that are every bit as enveloping as we've come to expect. Spine-tinglingly good late-night listening.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

AUDIOBOOKS


MORTIMER & WHITEHOUSE
Gone Fishing
Packed with bonus material and exclusive nonsense
READ BY THE AUTHORS
Life, Death, and the Thrill of the Catch

Mortimer & Whitehouse Gone Fishing

Authors: Bob Mortimer, Paul Whitehouse
Publisher: Blink Publishing
Length: 6 hours 5 mins

We've reviewed the excellent *Gone Fishing* book before, but this audiobook version is even better. Read by the authors – or rather, for the most part pretty much ad-libbed by the sounds of it – this comes across like an extended, six-hour podcast of two very funny, likeable blokes discussing fishing and pretty much everything else, from their health problems to the price of M&S underwear. Frequently hilarious, this is great company for a long drive.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

The Storyteller

Author: Dave Grohl
Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio UK
Length: 10 hrs and 35 mins

It's not perhaps all that surprising that Dave Grohl's life as a rock musician has led him into some strange situations; but what is surprising is just how accomplished he is at relaying his memoirs in this riveting audiobook. From his time in Nirvana to touring with the Foo Fighters, plus a whole lot more in between, this is a great collection of rock'n'roll anecdotes.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Movies of the month

Don't Look Up

Actors: Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence
Certificate: 15
Runtime: 2 hours 25 minutes
Availability: Netflix

This big new movie release on Netflix follows two low-level astronomers as they detect a huge new 'planet killer' asteroid on a collision course for Earth, and scramble to convince the world to take action. Trouble is, the US president is indifferent and a goliath tech company is more interested in harvesting the asteroid's resources than actually diverting it. The movie is overlong, but certainly thought-provoking.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Ghostbusters: Afterlife

Actors: Paul Rudd, Finn Wolfhard, Bill Murray, Dan Akroyd, Ernie Hudson
Certificate: 12
Runtime: 2 hours 4 minutes
Price: £14.99 (Blu-ray, Amazon)

After 2016's poorly conceived reboot, this new Ghostbusters movie delivers both thrills and fan service – plus a script that feels like a mix of character piece and summer blockbuster. A single mum moves into an old farmhouse and soon discover a link to the original Ghostbusters, now disbanded. But soon enough, spirits are running amuck – so who ya gonna call?

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Dune

Actors: Timothée Chalamet, Rebecca Furguson, Oscar Isaac
Certificate: 12
Runtime: 2 hours 35 minutes
Price: £14.99 (Blu-ray, Amazon)

This rebooted version of Frank Herbert's seminal '80s sci-fi opus is a superb adaptation. Director Denis Villeneuve (*Blade Runner 2049*) delivers a stunning vision of the most powerful houses in the universe fighting over ultra-precious 'spice' on the desert planet Arrakis. A bit like an epic Shakespeare tragedy in space, it takes time to build – but the climax is well worth it.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

The Beatles: Get Back

Certificate: 16+
Runtime: 1 Season
Availability: Disney+

Directed by Peter Jackson, this three-part documentary uses real found footage to paint an intimate, fly-on-the-wall picture of the biggest band in the world at work on preparing 14 new songs for their first live performance in two years (and as it turns out, also one of their last). Using immaculately restored, never-seen-before material, this is an unmissable insight into one of the greatest bands ever.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

Nomads

Author: John Nevill
Publisher: Michael Terence Publishing
ISBN: 978-1800942080
Price: £12.99 (paperback)

Following on from his successful memoir *Only Fools and Horsepower*, driver John Nevill's *Nomads* takes readers on a no-holds-barred journey into the realities of cross-border trucking. As the Gulf War drew to a close, the economic climate was right for hauliers to shift goods from the UK to far-flung corners of the Middle East – a frequently perilous trip, but also one that perfectly encapsulates the 'Golden Age' of trucking. Nevill's accounts of his trips across the continents make for fantastic reading, coming across as insightful, honest, humorous and inspirational. Reading this book is like being in the cab as the author battles across the desert through countries ravaged by war – and is unmissable for those interested in the Middle East Run.

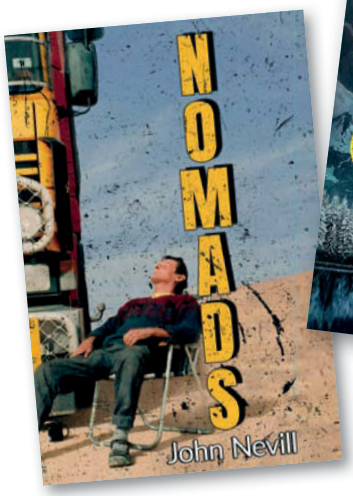
OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆

The Sanatorium

Publisher: Sarah Pearse
ISBN: 978-0552177313
Price: £7.49
(Waterstones, paperback)

Fans of wintry whodunnits should seek out this chilling new thriller. Set in a mysterious hotel tucked away in the Swiss Alps, a series of unexplained disappearances lead a holidaying detective to dig into the local community's murky secrets.

OUR RATING ☆☆☆☆☆



READERS' LETTERS

SEARCH IMPEX LIMITED
Model Vehicles – Driving your Business Forward

Letter of the Month wins a fantastic Search-Impex model truck!

Mike and Karen Faraci use their mighty Kenworth T680 to shuttle fish along Florida's East Coast

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FLORIDA FIGURES

I've just read your February 2022 issue. Interesting magazine as usual, however a couple of mistakes I have spotted.

The article on Mike and Karen Faraci talks about their weekly 2300-mile trip up the East Coast, but then says they have done 10,500 miles in 10 months and will change the truck in three years at 35,000 miles. You then go on to say they "burn just under one gallon of diesel per mile on average". These figures don't ring true to me!

A few pages on, Next Month proudly proclaims you will be featuring Aylestone Transport's MD, Bodge Aylestone. I think you will find his surname is Ward.

Geoff Stevens,
Stevenage

Thanks for the corrections, Geoff. You're right about Bodge's surname, so our sincere apologies to him and any readers who picked up on our error. Read the full story starting page 36.

And you're also right about the maths not quite stacking up in our story about Mike and Karen Faraci's fish transport exploits in Florida. The article was first written by Hans in his native Swedish, and then translated to English – and some elements were 'lost in translation', so to speak, after we converted his original figures.

Part of the problem is we overlooked the fact Hans had used Scandinavian miles in his original text – where one Scandinavian mile is equivalent to 10 km, or around 6.2 UK miles.

Hans says: "It's as simple as a mix up between litres and gallons, and Scandinavian miles and kilometres compared to UK/US miles. The weekly round-trip is correct at 2300 miles, but some weeks Mike and Karen do a double trip. At the time the article was written, the Kenworth had done 17,000 Scandinavian miles (105,400 UK miles) since Mike bought it new 10 months previously, making it around 10540 UK miles per month. And when the truck has done around 50,000 Scandinavian miles (310,000 UK miles), Mike looks to change it. I hope this make sense!"

In addition, Hans' original text said the Kenworth combination burns 3.2 litres (0.7 gallons) of fuel per mile on average with a full load, with double diesel tanks holding just over 900 litres. That gives a distance of about 280 miles per fill.

Sorry for the confusion; we'll buy a new calculator! –ed.

On the road for Christmas

Firstly, we'd like to wish everyone all the very best for 2022. Just before Christmas, a local driver gave my autistic son, Zach, a spin in his DAF – and to say he enjoyed it as an understatement.

Roll on 2022 truck show season.

Adi Forster
Via Instagram (autism_dad_photography)

LEFT Zach kicked off his Christmas in fine style with a ride in a smart DAF XF510 FTG

LEFT Martyn Hookway – who was praised by his colleague for being a great role model for young drivers – drives this smart Scania for Luke Furse

Young driver honoured

As it turns out, a former colleague and good friend of mine has sent an email in to you (see Letters, November 2021 issue). I have gone and purchased this edition already and I'd like to thank you for printing it. It's nice to know that people think you do a good job.

I have included a couple of photos of the lorry I am lucky enough to pilot. I do apologise, I am lorry mad!

Once again, thank you ever so much.

Martyn Hookway
By email

No problem at all, Martyn – certainly don't apologise for being lorry-mad. And what a smart Scania you have there! Your colleague Ryan Workman was clearly impressed with your work ethic, and so are we. Ryan, who won our Letter of the Month prize of a model truck, wanted us to send it to you instead. So well done, we reckon you deserve it –ed.

BEST OF THE FORUM

Hot topics under discussion on *Trucking*'s social media pages…

Electric boogaloo

We said:
A well-known supermarket has taken delivery of UK's first commercially used fully electric heavy freight articulated trucks. What are your thoughts about the switch to electric?

You answered:
"The technology simply isn't there to make electric HGVs a viable alternative to diesel. The range is crap compared to diesel, they have less payload than diesel due to the hefty weight of the batteries, and they take a lot longer to charge up than the few minutes it takes to fill a diesel tank. Hydrogen power is the way forward for goods vehicles." – christie.ashley87 (*Instagram*)

"I'd only use electric lorries for short-distance haulage if I had a company, till the range improves. Start small, then build up." – egan_truckphotography (*Instagram*)

"Am I missing something here? They are plated for 37 tonnes, so seven tonnes less than normal, which will mean additional trucks on the road to compensate for the shortfall in weight that is normally delivered." – Stephen Cule

"@Stephen Cule: No distribution centre to supermarket trucks run at anything like 25 tonnes fully loaded, let alone 37 or even 44 tonnes." – Douglas Ramsey

"I take the mick, but seriously tho, good on them for trying. Big firms gotta do the trials to get them tested and anywhere near cheap enough for the average haulier to even consider them." – Corinne Murphy

"Our milk man had an electric delivery truck in 1956. We used to run to the back of it, pinch a bottle of milk then run past him drinking it!" – Mick Reilly

Mobile phone crackdown

We said:
New laws concerning mobile phone use at the wheel have come into force in a bid to keep roads safer. What do you think about this initiative?

You answered:
"Drink driving and mobile phone usage should be the same, and that should be instant ban if caught and especially as mobile phones progressed to the point that they have. You shouldn't even need to hold a mobile phone now while driving..." – Collin Oates

"Anything government does usually ends up worse than the problem!!!" – Jonathan Trotter

"It's about time. Now let's see how many go to court. It will be interesting to see. But you will always get someone who thinks they are above the law." – Dave Vegas

"Points and a fine have been in force for years for stationary traffic; I know, I found out 11 years ago when I got one… But hey, I forgot there was a driver shortage – or did Bojo and his chums get rid of that after 20-odd years?" – Gordon Smith

"Spend more time and money on keeping drivers safe at night from load and diesel thieves. Even safe parking spots are hit by thieves." – Stuart Read

Get your views published!

Write to: The Editor, Trucking magazine, Kelsey Media, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent, ME18 6AL or email trucking.ed@kelsey.co.uk. You must include your full name and postal address, which can be withheld upon request. Anonymous letters or those without addresses will not be published. Each month, the letter the editor judges to be Letter of the Month will win a fantastic model truck. We reserve the right to edit all published letters. No correspondence can be entered into.

YOU & THE LAW

Got a legal query you need clearing up? Our resident legal expert is on hand to offer free professional help and advice

By David Glover
PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

Operating regulations
CROSS-BORDER CARGO

Q What are Goods Movement References?

A If you are a haulier and move goods through a port in the UK that uses the Goods Vehicle Movement Service (GVMS), you will need to register for the service to get your goods through customs. There is a list of ports using this service, which can be found online at https://bit.ly/GVMS-port-list

Recent guidance has been issued, which I have detailed below:

From January 1, 2022, anyone moving goods between Great Britain (GB) and the European Union (EU) through a Goods Vehicle Movement Service (GVMS) border location must be registered to use this service.

Current arrangements will continue to apply to goods moving from the island of Ireland to GB, while discussions on the Northern Ireland Protocol are continuing.

HMRC is aware of some common issues occurring when customers are creating Goods Movement References (GMRs) into GVMS, which are causing them delays at the border. To help avoid these, issues you must:

- Get a GMR for all movements, including empties
- Ensure you're entering the correct type of declaration reference for your movement: Entry Reference Number (ERN) for imports via CHIEF or Movement Reference Number (MRN) for imports via the Customs Declaration Service (CDS). Declaration Unique Consignment Reference (DUCR) for exports via CHIEF or CDS. Check which references should be entered in a GMR at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-a-goods-movement-reference
- Not use the trailer references when entering your Vehicle Registration Number (VRN) into the GMR for an accompanied movement, as this means the carrier will be unable to validate your GMR. The VRN must match the vehicle presenting the GMR
- Not add EU export Movement Reference Numbers (MRN) into the GMR

If you do not fulfil these requirements, your GMR will be invalid and you will not be allowed to board the vessel. The person making the customs declarations for the goods you're moving should:

- Use the dual location code for all exports declarations from GB to EU, when the goods will be moved through the border locations of Dover and Eurotunnel. This gives you flexibility on your route. Check the location codes for roll-on/roll-off border locations for use in CDS or CHIEF.
- Ensure 'RRS01' is entered in the customs declaration in box 44 for CHIEF or Data Element 2/2 for the CDS, if you will be moving the goods through a GVMS border location. If this is not done, GVMS will not be able to validate it on the submitted GMR. For more details, please refer to the recently published *Customs Information Paper*.
- Check the status of declarations once the goods have arrived in GB, as you may need to take further action to release the goods from customs if they are held.

You should use your GMR in the check if you need to report for an inspection service to understand if your goods are held. If you're arriving into the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel, you'll need to attend an inland border facility to have these checks carried out. For all other GVMS border locations, you must go to the inspection facility within or near the port if your goods are held. Register for GVMS and find out how to move goods through border locations that use the service.

This is a technical topic and if you have a specific question about importing or exporting, you should contact HMRC's helpline.

Tachograph regulations
ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS

Q What are the powers and sanctions available to enforce breaches of drivers' hours and tachograph rules?

A Legislation has provided authorised Driver and

Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) examiners with powers that include: the power to inspect vehicles; the power to prohibit and direct vehicles; powers relating to the investigation of possible breaches of regulations; the power to instigate, conduct and appear in proceedings at a magistrates' court; and the power to issue improvement notices and prohibition notices in relation to working time rules.

Sanctions which can be taken against drivers' hours and tachograph rules infringements is largely determined by legislation. The online commentary on these issues indicates the following: Minor infringements that appear to enforcement staff to have been committed either accidentally or due to the inexperience of the driver/operator, and are isolated instances, may be dealt with by means of a verbal warning. This will include a clarification of the infringement and an explanation of the consequences of continued infringement.

Offence rectification notice may be issued to operators for a number of infringements not related to safety, and give them 21 days to carry out a rectification of the shortcoming, otherwise prosecution will be considered.

Prohibition notices: Many drivers' hours and tachograph rules infringements attract a prohibition. A prohibition is not strictly a 'sanction', rather an enforcement tool to remove an immediate threat to road safety.

When issued, driving of the vehicle is prohibited for either a specified or an unspecified period until the conditions stated on the prohibition note are satisfied. Where the prohibition is issued for an unspecified period, a note indicating the removal of the prohibition must be issued before use of the vehicle is permitted. In addition to attracting a prohibition, the matter will be considered for prosecution.

In certain circumstances a vehicle which has been prohibited will also be immobilised to prevent further use. Once the situation which led to the prohibition being imposed has been rectified and the payment of a fee has been made, the vehicle will be released.

Fixed penalties and deposits: Infringing drivers with verifiable UK addresses are, in the most routine cases, dealt with by means of a fixed penalty, which can be considered by the driver for up to 28 days. Breaches of drivers' hours rules will attract a level of fixed penalty fine that is graduated depending on the seriousness. Drivers without a verifiable address are asked to pay a deposit equal to the fixed penalty and further driving is prohibited pending receipt of that payment. DVSA can still take cases to court if it is deemed necessary.

Prosecution: If it is considered to be in the public interest, more serious infringements are considered for prosecution, either against the driver, the operator or other undertakings, or against all of them.

Also, in terms of referral to the traffic commissioner, this can occur where the driver is the holder of a vocational licence and/or the operator is the holder of an operator's licence, enforcement staff may report infringements by either the driver or the operator to the traffic commissioner.

Drivers' hours
STATUTORY DEFENCES

Q Are there any statutory defences against drivers' hours offences?

A The simple answer is yes, but they apply only in certain circumstances – and if someone considers they might be affected, they should seek specific advice in relation to their application as it needs to be considered carefully. A very broad overview is as follows:

Where an infringement of the domestic drivers' hours rules occurs, the law protects from conviction in court those drivers who can prove that, because of unforeseen difficulties, they were unavoidably delayed in finishing a journey and breached the rules. It also protects employers if any driver was involved in other driving jobs the employer could not have known about.

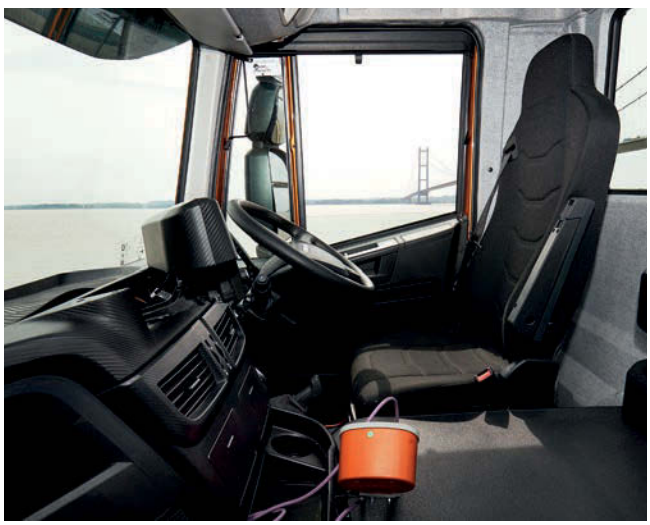
In relation to infringements of the EU drivers' hours rules, the law protects from conviction in court those drivers who can prove that, because of unforeseen difficulties, they were unavoidably delayed in finishing a journey and breached the rules.

EU/AETR rules make operators liable for any infringements committed by their drivers. However, operators will not be held responsible for these offences if they can show at the time of the infringement, the driver's work was being organised in full consideration of the rules, and in particular that:

- *No payments were made that encouraged breaches*
- *Work was properly organised*
- *The driver was properly instructed and regular checks were made.*

Operators must also show they have taken all reasonable steps to avoid the contravention. Under the EU/AETR rules, enforcement action can be taken against operators and drivers for offences detected in Great Britain but committed in another country, provided the offender has not already been penalised.

As stated at the outset, this is only a very general overview and advice should be sought on specific instances.



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COURT & INQUIRY

News straight from the courtrooms of the haulage industry's latest legal cases

By Michael Jewell

PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

Samuel Hunter / Hunter Transport
FIVE-YEAR DISQUALIFICATION FOLLOWS DRIVERS' HOURS ABUSE & UNAUTHORISED OPERATION

Drivers' hours and tachograph offences and the use of more vehicles than authorised has led to the revocation of the licence held by Lairg-based Samuel Hunter, trading as Hunter Transport, and his disqualification from holding or obtaining an O-licence for five years by traffic commissioner Claire Gilmore.

Evidence was given by traffic examiners (TEs) that 245 drivers' hours offences had been identified over a period of around three months, including numerous and serious instances of driving off-card and falsification of records by drivers who were found to be using other driver cards.

It was also found Mr Hunter had operated vehicles in excess of the number which his licence authorised, had not been truthful with DVSA in the course of its investigation, had failed to notify convictions on the part of his employees, and that he had operated for many years with a transport manager 'in name only' on the licence.

Mr Hunter did not dispute the evidence or findings by the TEs. He was sorry for his failings. He accepted the undertakings on his operator licence in relation to complying with the rules on drivers' hours had not been adhered to. He also admitted, despite the fact he had repeatedly advised DVSA officers to the contrary, that he did not have any systems in place to analyse driver activity. He accepted a significant number of the 245 infringements were extremely serious and conceded his failures had given rise to a serious risk to road safety and affected fair competition. He did not accept the drivers couldn't complete the journeys he was allocating them within the law, saying it was tight, but he had done so himself many times. He accepted he had operated vehicles in excess of his authorisation, saying he had bought two new ones and it was around the time they were changing over.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Hunter said the transport manager, Mr McKay, had only properly acted as such for the first two years of his appointment, which had been around 15 years ago. Systems had now improved, and the intention was David, his son, would take over the business. David had started his CPC exams, but there had been a change in the exam system which meant he had to start all over again. He had purchased a new fish business, and it was his intention to take a step back when David was qualified and concentrate on the business, rather than transport. If he lost his licence, then 14 or 15 people would lose their jobs. The business was also his son's future.

TE Haddow said she was very concerned Mr Hunter sought to blame his drivers for everything. Her opinion was his failure to have any systems to identify and manage offending and infringements on the part of drivers had facilitated serious offending. Moreover, she considered it must have been obvious to Mr Hunter that some of the work he was asking drivers to do could not be done lawfully within the drivers' hours rules. Mr Hunter should, and would, have known if he had cared to undertake any analysis that the law was repeatedly being broken by his drivers.

> "Mr Hunter's dereliction of duty and wilful disregard for the laws on driving was one of the worst the TC had seen."

She had reviewed the documentation relating to drivers' hours in advance of the inquiry. There were still many different drivers driving the vehicles, many on a casual or ad hoc basis, but there did not appear to be any information showing Mr Hunter was checking all drivers' driving times or entitlements.

In her decision, the commissioner said Mr Hunter's evidence at his interview with DVSA had been that it had all been the drivers' fault. He considered he should have been able to rely on them to drive within the law. He now conceded he should have had systems to check, but he still appeared to be of the view all his troubles had arisen as a result of the drivers' actions. Some 245 drivers' hours infringements had been identified by DVSA in their investigation over a short period. Those included gravely serious and widespread falsification offences. Those offences had gone unnoticed because Mr Hunter had failed to carry out any analysis of his drivers' activity. He had used vehicles in excess of the authorisation on his O-licence for several days in May 2020. He had failed to notify her office of the conviction of one of his employees for a driving offence. The evidence disclosed there were still significant deficiencies in his systems for maintaining vehicles and ensuring the laws on driving were being adhered to.

This was a serious case. Of grave concern was the fact Mr Hunter had allowed a 'name only' transport manager arrangement to exist for over a decade. Many years had therefore passed with no one exercising continuous and effective management of this transport operation. That absence of management had permitted repeat and serious offending to go unchecked. When pressed, Mr Hunter conceded he knew such arrangement was unacceptable, but he had continued with it anyway.

She did not believe his claim the journeys he allocated to his drivers could all be completed lawfully and within time. Two of the drivers spoke of a culture of pressure which led to them offending to try and complete their journeys on time.

Mr Hunter did not ask his drivers to break the law, but the culture of pressure he created, coupled with his deliberate failure to monitor driving activity, actively encouraged it.

She considered his willingness to deceive, coupled with his wilful neglect and repeated failings, demonstrated a flagrant disregard for the operator licensing regime on his part. There had been persistent failures to address critical road safety matters. Mr Hunter's dereliction of duty and wilful disregard for the laws on driving was one of the worst she had seen. She could not be satisfied he would comply in the future. Given the magnitude of his failings, and the serious impacts on road safety and fair competition which they had given rise to, she was satisfied he should be put out of business.

Langdon Transport Ltd

LANGDON TRANSPORT WINS FRESH LICENCE

Devon and Cornwall based Langdon Transport Ltd, the revocation of whose licence for 27 vehicles and 27 trailers was delayed for three months at the end of June by traffic commissioner Kevin Rooney, has been granted a fresh licence for 32 vehicles and 30 trailers by the commissioner following a Bristol public inquiry.

In his decision in June revoking the licence and disqualifying sole director Steven Langdon from holding or obtaining an O-licence for five years, and its transport manager Ian Hurt from acting as such for three years, the commissioner took into account 35,000 vehicle transactions before the company's self-service account was disabled, the operation of more vehicles than authorised, serious maintenance problems, and fraud over furlough payments.

He said Steven Langdon has been to public inquiry five times. That was astonishing, but there was no limit to the number of times a traffic commissioner might provide another chance. At a public inquiry in 2017, he had not curtailed or suspended the licence because he concluded the hearing believing the company would itself curtail its operation to live within its licence authority. Within only a few days, the urge to operate more vehicles than authorised overtook Mr Langdon and he was back to business as usual, or as 'usual' looked in Langdon Transport. Since the company's licence was granted, during which time authority had been for between 15 and 27 vehicles, there had been an absolutely staggering 11,832 vehicles specified. There were 35,000 vehicle transactions. The reason the number of transactions was not double the number of vehicle specifications was because vehicles had been removed so quickly after having been specified that the system had dealt with it as an error, and no disc had been issued. That was licence abuse on an industrial scale over many years.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme was not intended for short-term absences from work due to sickness or self-isolation. He considered the furlough claims for the latter two drivers were unlawful. Furlough was a new concept for most and it was incumbent upon employers to make proper enquiries as to eligibility before claiming public funds. He had no evidence that happened here, so he considered the claims to be fraudulent. That struck at the heart of the company's good repute. Mr Hurt had been responsible for persistent and deliberate operation well in excess of the licence authority and for a sustained period of time. He attended the public inquiry in 2017. He knew what needed to be done. He did not do it. He had said he hadn't done so because he was, at that time, just a name on the licence. That was not what a transport manager was.

In not disqualifying the company from holding an O-licence, the commissioner said should Langdon Transport present itself under genuine fresh control, he believed it could operate compliantly. The operation did have positive features. The initial MoT pass rate was in line with the national average and the final fail rate was rather better. The current position showed compliance could be achieved when it needed to be. The problem he had was the rather factual positives were rather over-shadowed by basic dishonesty.

Delaying the implementation of his decision for three months, the commissioner said this was a large operation with some 50 people relying on it for their income. Submissions were helpfully provided for the transfer of the business to a new owner. Given the business was currently, if perhaps only briefly, at the top of the compliance saw-tooth, he was deferring the coming into effect of the revocation to allow a fresh business to present itself. (*Trucking*, issue 460).

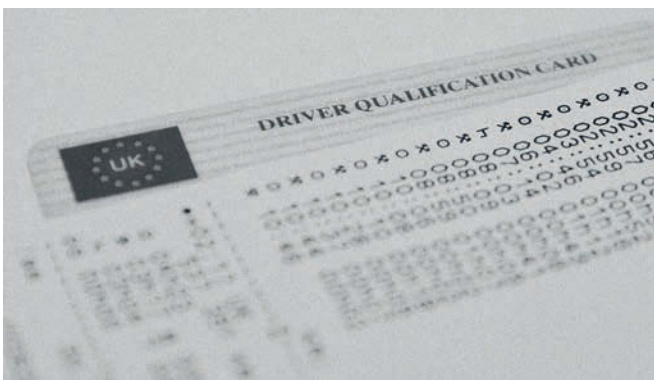
In granting the fresh licence, subject to undertakings offered that Steven Langdon would not play any part in the management of the business and would not attend the operating centres other than to collect personal effects; and that financial evidence in the name of Langdon Transport Ltd covering the months of March, April and May 2022 would be sent to OTC Bristol by June 30, 2022 which showed the financial standing amount required for the licence at that point had been met as an average over those three months, the commissioner said he had heard evidence from the applicant directors Graham Witts-Davies, Derren Estall and Stephen Jennings about their respective backgrounds. Clearly there has been previous association with Steven Langdon, but he found that to be a neutral feature. Mr Witts-Davies and Mr Estall were also the nominated transport managers. He also heard from Guy Small in relation to finance.

He was told and was satisfied Steven Langdon and Carl Langdon had both left the business, as had former transport manager Ian Hurt. He was told of the current commercial position of the business and he accepted what he was told. He saw evidence that maintenance was now outsourced. While rectification might be undertaken in-house, the declaration of roadworthiness was signed thereafter by the maintenance provider. He had heard description of sound systems for managing drivers' hours and tachographs.

On a granting of this application, a full transition of ownership and control would conclude. The applicant directors and transport managers had the necessary good repute, knowledge and ability to lead a compliant operation. He was impressed by their determination to do so. Having recorded the undertakings and allowed a short period for submission of further financial evidence, he was satisfied all the mandatory criteria were met.

Following the grant of this licence, the revocation of the previous licence would take effect.

> "Since the company's licence was granted, during which time authority had been for between 15 and 27 vehicles, there had been an absolutely staggering 11,832 vehicles specified."



ADR ADVICE

Your dangerous goods queries answered

By Keith Antrobus
PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

Compare & contrast

Q *Normally my employer buys brand-new tractor units, but the supplier can't seem to get us any new ones now for nearly a year. Due to this, he has had to buy a couple of second-hand vehicles. As these have come from a much larger company than ours, we are confident the ADR specification of these vehicles is correct. The vehicles have a master switch in the cab and two master switches on the outside that have green lights above them. There is also a security seal across the sunroof handle so it can't be opened, with a sticker on it saying 'ADR'. Our usual vehicles do not have any of these things, so we are concerned our vehicles should be set to the same specification for ADR.*

A Unfortunately, you haven't included what type of vehicle you are using. My assumption is you do not operate fuel tankers, but have purchased tractor units that had previously been used for fuel tankers. In this case, the points you have queried are relevant for fuel tankers, so probably wouldn't be required for your operation.

In order to be permitted onto loading terminals, fuel tankers usually require a safe loading pass (SLP). This includes a number of things that are additional to ADR, based on the DSEAR (Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations). Some requirements, as you have pointed out, include having green lights that indicate the vehicle electrics are active, which would obviously not be safe when loading fuel. Another is sealing the cab sunroof; after all, you wouldn't want a spark from inside the cab to exit through the sunroof and land on a fuel tanker.

Computer says no

Q *My company manufactures and consigns various chemicals, but we are having difficulty with one particular product: a dilution of dioxane. We have made it less flammable, which has changed the packing group from II to III. When we attempted to consign this, our haulier refused to accept it, saying the description is incorrect. I have checked and according to ADR, as our new flashpoint temp is 32 degrees C, packing group III is correct. The haulier's dangerous goods software will not allow the dioxane to be carried under packing group III, so they won't take it.*

A The haulier is correct. Dioxane is packing group II; there is no entry for dioxane in packing group III. You will find some substances in ADR do have multiple entries for packing groups, but dioxane is not one of them.

To be in packing group II, the flashpoint temperature has to be less than 23 degrees C. As your dilution has resulted in a flashpoint temperature of 32 degrees C (and I assume an initial boiling point that's above 35 degrees C), you are correct to assign packing group III. However, as dioxane has a single entry in ADR which is packing group II, you should not consign this as being dioxane. This would explain the haulier refusing to accept the load.

ADR does have a procedure for a situation like this. I would advise consigning the substance as UN 1993 Flammable Liquid N.O.S (Contains Dioxane), 3, PGIII. This N.O.S (Not Otherwise Specified) is used when a substance cannot be specified – ie, it no longer meets the criteria for dioxane, but it does meet the criteria for being a flammable liquid in packing group III.

Revoked ADR

Q *I have made a mistake and failed to make sure my load was safe. As a result, an IBC of chemicals fell off my wagon, shattered, and spilt across a public road. This was just outside the factory where I loaded the IBCs and the staff contained it and cleaned it up. The factory informed the emergency services and things escalated somewhat from there. I have received a written warning for it as well as having to take a training course on load safety. The HR manager has warned me the authorities may take things further, which could include having my ADR revoked. As the company only carries dangerous goods, this would cost me my job. Can you let me know if this would be the likely outcome, please?*

A The good news is ADR is a certificate, not a licence. There is no mechanism for revoking, endorsing or restricting your ADR certificate. The bad news is several years ago, a driver had his LGV licence revoked by the TC for spilling dangerous goods (although his case appears to have been a deliberate act). In that case, I attended a DfT meeting where the policeman who prosecuted the driver called for ADR certificates to be revocable, but it was agreed at that meeting it wasn't possible to implement this. The authorities do have a number of actions they could take – after all, you were carrying an unsafe load, the consequences of which could have been fatal. But regardless, your ADR certificate will not be removed. T

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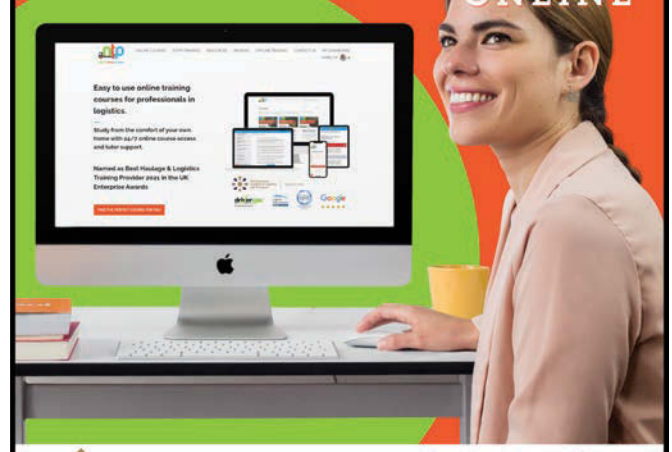

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Early imported F86 tractor units like the one seen here were on a 3 m wheelbase and were plated for 30 tons gcw

SWEDISH BARNSTORMER

We begin a two-part analysis of the iconic and hugely disruptive F86 – the first Volvo lorry to be officially imported into the UK

By Peter Davies
PHOTOGRAPHY/IMAGES PETER DAVIES

With its home truck market being relatively limited in size, Volvo needed to expand into the lucrative export markets in the '60s if it was to survive and flourish. The UK was seen as an important market and the truck that spearheaded Volvo's UK campaign in the late '60s was the F86. The unassuming little Swede soon won over hundreds of customers throughout the country. It answered most operators' needs at that time and, best of all, it came with the endorsement of a respected ex-haulier – namely, Jim McKelvie.

During the '60s there was growing dissatisfaction with some traditional British manufacturers. Long delivery times and inadequate parts and service back-up led a lot of hauliers to turn their attention towards Europe. Trade barriers were coming down and the 'Continentals' were only too pleased to get a foothold in the UK, which most regarded as a difficult challenge.

With the surge in demand for 32-ton artics brought about by new legislation in 1964, British manufacturers were hard-pressed to cope with demand and many

ABOVE Derbyshire-based Butterley Brick Co was among the early F86 customers. This outfit is unusual in having a steering trailer bogie

customers were forced to wait anything up to two years for delivery. When British hauliers got their first taste of Swedish products, they were very impressed – not only by the quality, but by the promise of reliable aftersales service.

Jim McKelvie & Ailsa Trucks

Having served in the haulage business for most of his life, Jim McKelvie understood the importance of aftersales back-up and readily available spares. He had experienced frustrating delays in obtaining parts for trucks in his own fleet. McKelvie & Co of Barrhead ran a big operation with a fleet strength of 250 lorries.

The McKelvie family had a long history in transport dating back to the horse-and-cart era, having been founded in 1880. In 1963 Jim agreed to sell the company to the Transport Development Group (TDG) and two years later he left, turning his attention to selling, rather than operating, lorries. The TDG itself was absorbed into Norbert Dentressangle in 2010, later still becoming part of XPO Logistics.

Another early customer for the F86-30 was Sunderland's (Herts) Hauliers Ltd of Kings Langley

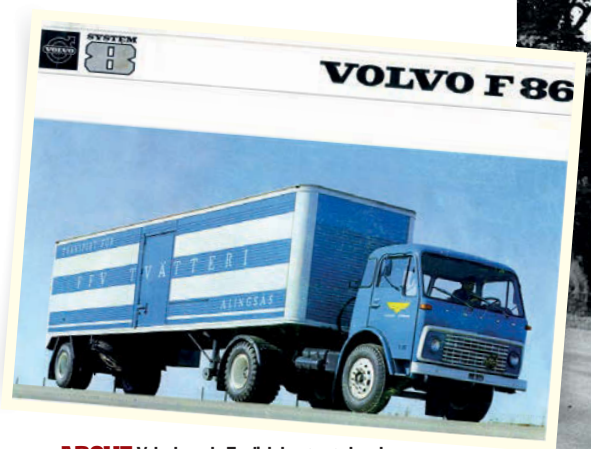
Entering the UK in 1967, AB Volvo of Gothenburg had just launched its latest 'System 8' range of heavy trucks, of which the two leading models were the F86 and F88. After a thorough survey of British and foreign manufacturers, Jim McKelvie was convinced the new Volvos offered great potential for UK sales. By the beginning of 1967 he and his co-founder, ex-MD of the Pressed Steel Company's Linwood operations Jim Keyden, had set up a new company, Ailsa Trucks Ltd, with premises at Barrhead, near Glasgow. Very soon Ailsa Trucks began signing up a national network of some 20 regional distributors.

Driver appeal

There is no doubt the F86 had the edge over many of its British contemporaries, especially from the driver's viewpoint. They were easy ➤

> "There is no doubt the F86 had the edge over many of its British contemporaries."

As well as the F86-30 tractor unit, Ailsa Trucks marketed the 6x2 rigid – this tipper being its demonstrator



ABOVE Volvo's early English language brochure depicted only left-hand drive vehicles

Unsurprisingly, a number of Scottish fleets rapidly took to the new Volvos, among them Allison's Freightlines as seen here

diesels. British manufacturers had not fully exploited turbocharging, even though the technology had been around for many years. Volvo saw the benefits of increasing the power output from a smaller, lighter engine while still maintaining good fuel economy. Such engines could boast outputs of 180-200 bhp without the weight penalty of a bigger 10- or 12-litre diesel.

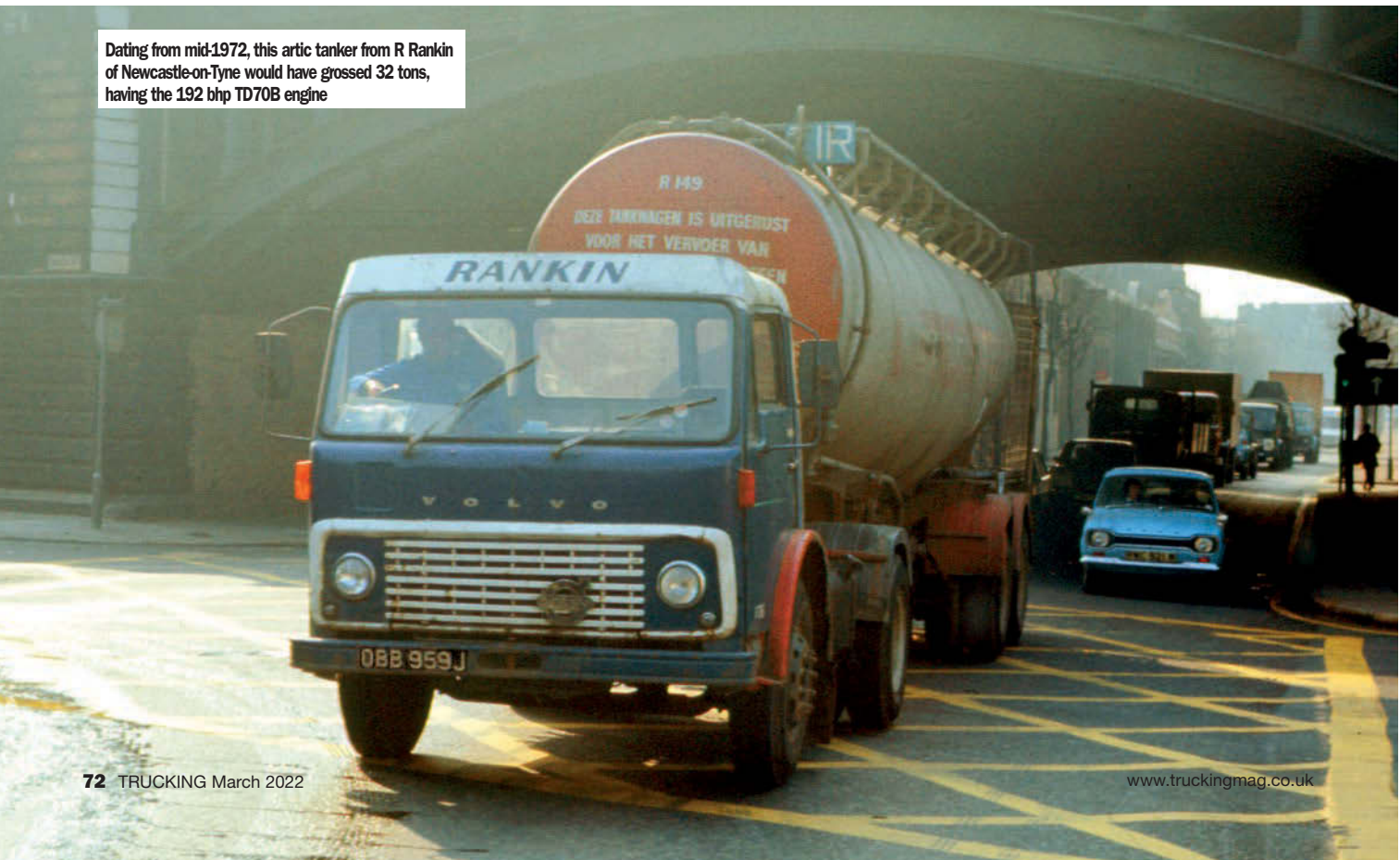
Another significant advantage was engine access – the F86 had a tilt cab. Most heavy-duty British tractors still had fixed cabs. Those that did have tilt cabs, such as the Leyland Ergomatic and the Foden S24,

ABOVE At the heart of the early F86-30 was Volvo's TD70 turbocharged, 6.7-litre diesel with a net output of 170 bhp

to handle and offered high levels of comfort and quietness. Though the engine capacity was only 6.7-litres, they were surprisingly powerful and drivers particularly welcomed the synchromesh gearbox and power-assisted steering which made the F86s so easy to drive. Though they were not available with a sleeper cab, it was possible to fit a folding bunk if required.

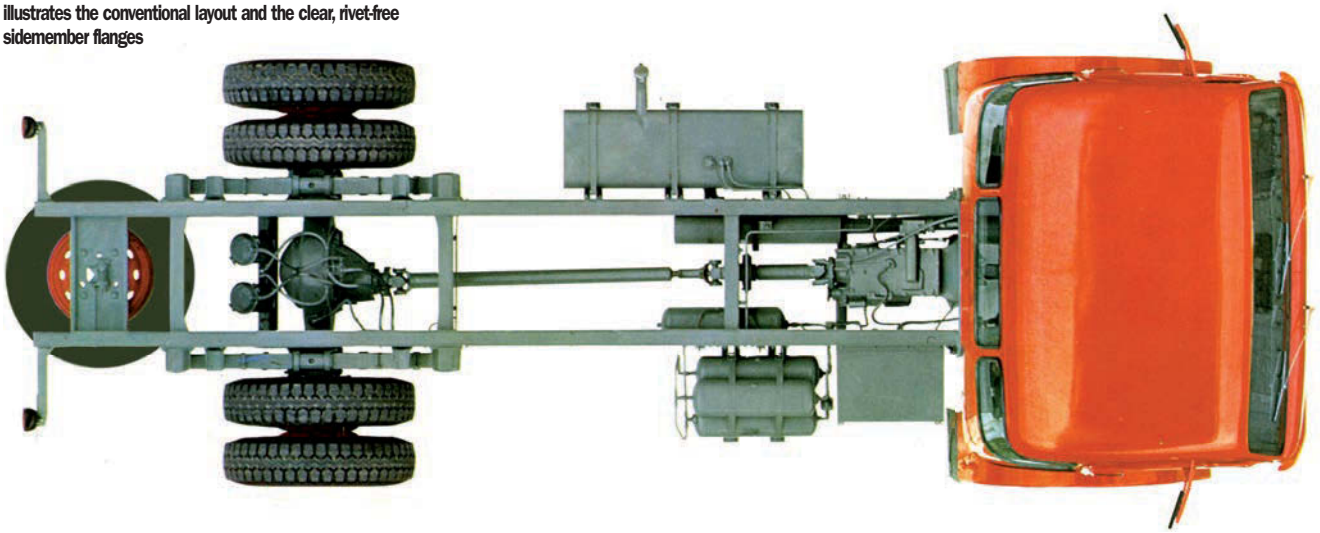
The secret of Volvo's good all-round performance lay in its turbocharged

ABOVE The London Brick Company welcomed the F86 6x2s and went on to build a large Volvo fleet, taking the place of AECs and Leylands



Dating from mid-1972, this artic tanker from R Rankin of Newcastle-on-Tyne would have grossed 32 tons, having the 192 bhp TD70B engine

BELOW This bird's-eye view of a Volvo F86 four-wheeler illustrates the conventional layout and the clear, rivet-free sidemember flanges



suffered with relatively cumbersome tilting procedures. The Dodge K series, Ford D series and BMC Mastiff were the only true tilt cabs, but they were not really in the maximum-weight category.

As can be seen from the accompanying pictures, the front wing on early F86s was flared out ahead of the wheel, resulting in a narrower entry step. From 1971 onwards, the front wings were redesigned with a constant radius. At the same time, the Volvo name badge on the front panel was positioned lower.

Power vs performance

On paper, it might be said the F86 was a bit borderline on power for a 32-tonner. The net power output of its TD70A engine was 170 bhp. In any case, when they first came on the market, they were limited to 30 tons gcw since the overall length limit was still 13 m. In order to qualify for 32 tons on four axles, the minimum outer axle spread had to be 11.58 m – virtually impossible within the 13 m length.

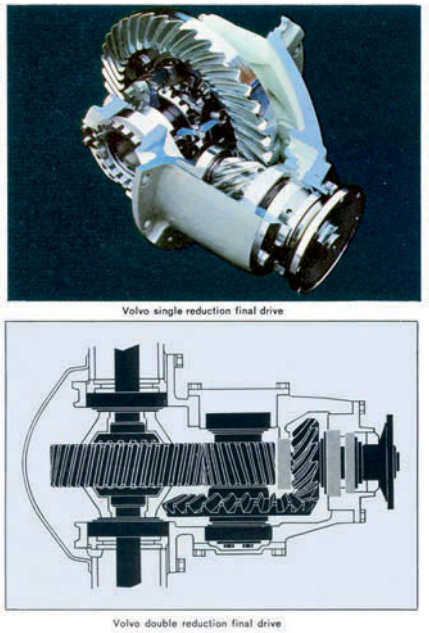
The F86, though plated for 32 tons, was initially marketed by Ailsa as a complete 30-ton, four-axle artic with a Highway 33 ft tandem at an all-in price of £4777. The list price of just the tractor unit was £3500, which included a 12-month parts and labour warranty. The tractor was the F86-30, the '30' signifying a 3 m wheelbase as opposed to the gcw. This was introduced specially for the UK market since the shortest model offered in the Swedish range was the F86-34 with a 3.4 m wheelbase.

Within a year of the first F86s taking to Britain's roads, Ailsa Trucks also began importing its big sister, the F88, with its 240 bhp 9.6-litre turbo. This was to become the number-one choice for long-distance and UK-European haulage; but the F86, regarded as more of a 'fleet' truck, continued to sell well. ➤

ABOVE Once the more powerful TD70B had replaced the TD70A, F86 artics could operate at 32 tonsm, as in the case of this HJ Calver outfit

> "Drivers particularly welcomed the synchromesh gearbox and power-assisted steering which made Volvo F86s so easy to drive."

ABOVE While not being particularly luxurious, the F86 cab was relatively quiet and comfortable compared with some British lorries of the era



ABOVE Early F86s with the TD70A had a double-reduction rear axle (lower). Later models with the TD70B and 70E had the single-reduction (top)

The vehicle was popular among cost-conscious operators looking for lightness and economy.

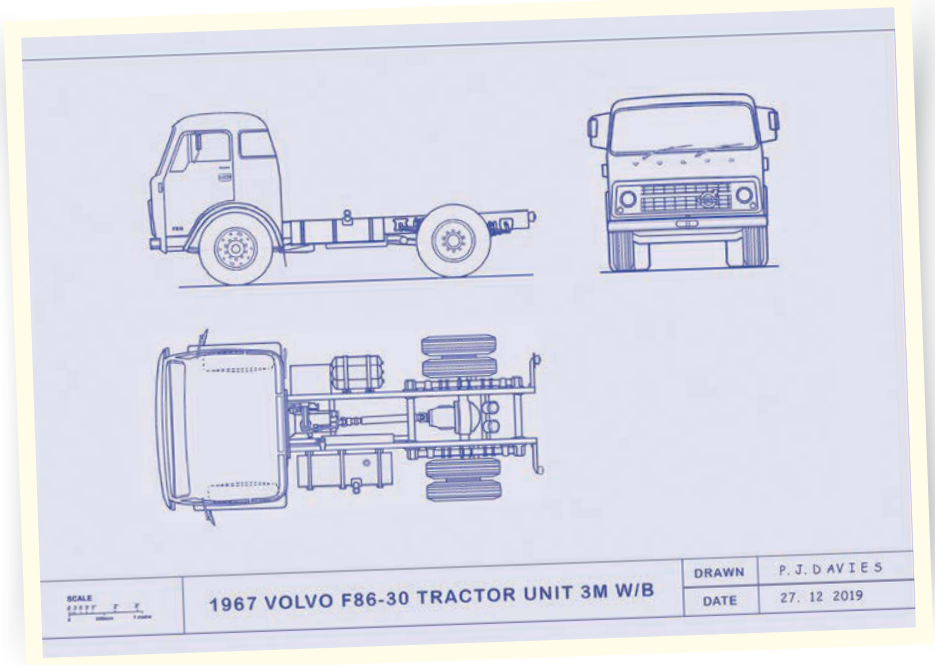
Volvo's 'System 8' project, which saw the development of the F86 and F88, began in 1964. Under the project, existing truck models underwent extensive redevelopment with the aim of setting the highest levels of comfort, safety, reliability and economy. The programme focused on eight component groups: namely the engine, gearbox, rear axle, chassis frame, steering, braking system, suspension and cab.

Background to a famous make

Volvo was a relative newcomer to heavy truck manufacture, having entered the market as late as 1929. Up until the early '60s, Volvo had concentrated on the bonneted trucks demanded by its home market. Conscious of the need to sell into export markets, the company decided to introduce forward-control models. There were three types – based on the existing bonneted Raske, Viking and Titan models. Volvo dubbed them 'Tip-top' models on account of their tilt cabs.

The bonneted Viking which formed the basis for the Tip-top Viking, and eventually the F86, was designated the L485. In Tip-top guise it became the L4851 (the '1' being added to signify forward control). Outwardly, the Viking Tip-top L4851 looked almost identical to the F86, but it pre-dated the 'System 8' development programme.

Interestingly, Volvo had dipped



ABOVE Layout drawing of the original imported Volvo F86-30 tractor unit which was on a wheelbase of 118 inches or 3 m

At first glance, this five-axle drawbar outfit looks as if the F86 is punching above its weight. Of course, the load could be bulky rather than heavy

> "Volvo's 'System 8' project, which saw the development of the F86 and F88, began in 1964."

a tentative toe in the UK market long before Ailsa Trucks was formed. As early as July 1963, Volvo Concessionaires Ltd, which handled UK sales of Volvo cars, imported an L4751 Raske Tip-top seven-tonner for operational trials with London-based Cubitt Town Transport. That left-hand drive truck, registered 608GUL, grossed 11.7 tons and was powered by the 4.7-litre TD47 turbo diesel. Outwardly the vehicle could be mistaken for an F86; although the F86, based on the Viking Tip-top, grossed 13.7 tons and took the more powerful TD67 6.7-litre engine.

Contemporary reports show the director of Cubitt Town Transport was very satisfied with the performance of the Volvo and its fuel consumption of around 10.6 mpg on urban work. Going back even further, to 1954, Volvo had tried, without much success, to market its bonneted trucks in the UK. The concessionaires at that time were Victor (Swedish Vehicles) Ltd of Malden in Surrey.

**Don't miss part two next issue which explores how, following initial success with imported lorries, Ailsa Trucks moved into assembling F86s for the UK market in Britain.*

ABOVE One South Wales haulier, Bill Entress, was very keen on Swedish trucks, having tried out a Scania LB76 as early as 1964

ABOVE Cheltenham-based Hydrol owned this nicely liveried F86 dating from 1973. Hydrol concrete admixture is a waterproofing agent

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SHOULDN'T WE BE TOLD?

On the new changes to the *Highway Code*, Dutch roundabouts and sneaky zebras…

By Bill Dean

PHOTOGRAPHY VARIOUS

The first *Highway Code* was published in 1931. It cost one old penny (equivalent to 20p) and had 21 pages. It updated the 1923 booklet entitled *Traffic signals to be used by the Police and Drivers*, and attempted to set out rules to ensure the safety of all road users. At that time, with one million vehicles on the road, over 4000 people were being killed yearly in accidents. (For 2020 with 40 million considerably safer vehicles, 1472 still died.) For the same reason, driving tests were introduced in 1935.

The *Highway Code* was produced after discussions with interested bodies: the Automobile Association (AA), police, Pedestrians Association, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, among others. Indeed, the MoT (or DfT as it is now) sensibly and regularly consults with road users before making changes to the *Code* and other issues, such as bus lanes and Smart Motorways. However, this is now the century of interest groups and lobbyists, and such discussions have moved on from meetings of "experts" examining a topic before coming to a consensus, to organised groups using such consultations to push their own agenda to the exclusion of others.

Back in 2008, I was part of such a meeting chaired by the Driving Standards Agency. Not because DfT had acknowledged my 30-plus years of transport journalism, but because I spotted an advert. In the classified section of the local paper between "full body massage" and "double bed for sale" was a box advert asking for input on "Learning to Drive" – 5 pm start, sandwiches provided. The DSA panel listening to our views were all high-level civil servants, including DSA's head, Colin Maddock, and a group of consultants. Why civil servants educated to degree level, committed to a lifetime career in a particular department and empowered to make decisions on our behalf should need expensive outside consultants when it was us – the public with skin in the game – they were there to consult, I didn't understand. However, it's only our money they're spending.

Besides me in my work boots and muck, there was a teacher with three sixth-form students, a number of driving school instructors, and a group of taxi drivers. The meeting started well, with everyone making some interesting points about the driving test, theory and practical, and possible improvements. Then the taxi drivers took over. For the rest of the allocated time, the only topic discussed was black cab deregulation and private hire drivers working with non-UK driving licences. So, no matter how professional and detached the panel were, they would leave that day with the concerns and interests of the taxi pressure group at the front of their mind. This would inevitably influence their decision making.

> "Risk assessment has been sacrificed on the altar of political correctness."

Between July and October 2020 there was another series of consultations. Because of Covid, they were held in office hours via *Zoom*. I have no information on the participants; I certainly wasn't one. But looking at its conclusions, I can see which pressure groups were involved. The changes read into law in Parliament on December 1 introduced a hierarchy of road users to improve the safety of vulnerable users.

Those that can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger they pose to others. I have no problem with that. However, when one of those changes is advice to cyclists (Rule 67) only pass to the left of slow vehicles when they are stationary or slow moving, instead of "don't do that, it's F****G dangerous," it's clear risk assessment has been sacrificed on the altar of political correctness.

Two local schemes which fall in the same category are Cambridge's Fendon Road roundabout and Manchester's zebra-lite crossings. It is a Dutch-style roundabout and easily surpasses Swindon's 'magic' one in the "avoid at all costs" category. Each of the four approach roads is firstly crossed by a standard zebra, then a cycle lane with priority, before vehicles actually enter the roundabout. You need a spinning head faster than Linda Blair's in *The Exorcist* to cope.

What works in Holland doesn't necessarily work here. 'Priorité à Droite' allows side junctions suicidal priority to enter main roads in France. Let's introduce that. Farmers will love it. Entering the A14 towing a trailer-load of sprouts takes forever. A sensible British engineer would use Toucan crossings instead; these allow pedestrians and mounted cyclists to cross safely together. Motorists understand traffic lights. We invented them. Then vehicles could move forward on the green signal.

The scheme's cost has risen to £2.3 million and has already had its first accident. Expect to see them popping up all over the country.

Under walking and cycling commissioner Chris Boardman, Manchester has started painting zebras across 20,000 side-street junctions at a cost of £300 each. This is to remind motorists when turning that any pedestrians crossing have priority (Rule 182). The difficulty is that without zigzags and flashing beacons, they will be treated as optional by motorists – like those at supermarkets and abroad – while empowered pedestrians will step out without looking, ignoring Rule 7 of the *Green Cross Code*.

Whatever the changes, the problem is the perennial one. Despite taking over £64 billion in fuel duty alone from motorists, communication from DfT is almost non-existent. Unless a concerted effort is made to explain the new rules, confusion will lead to accidents. As it has with Smart Motorways.

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